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BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

THESES

THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE AMERICAN VILLAGE

by

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LAWRENCE  
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LAURENCE

BY

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STRATEGIC AIR WARFARE

beginning

a

beginning

b effort to destroy local industrial and military  
to the point of

c II

beginning

d II

beginning

e II

beginning

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ae

beginning

## PROPACE

The village to be dealt with in the following discussion is not a place of definite population, rated by its number of modern inhabitants, nor typed by its occupations. The size of the town will range from small Greenfield to large-sized Boston; the occupations vary from coal-mining to farming; social life may consist of simple parties in the evening or elaborate balls in the day time; there are automobiles, planes, and radios; the village may be on a mountain side in Vermont, or near an industrial center in Illinois.

from "The Gospel of Beauty"

that "there is some bad in the best, and some good in the worst" is quite possibly true. The author of the *Gospel* shares of "bad", but the good qualities do much to overcome the bad. The village is certain to live on as a symbol of friendly democracy. Randolph S. Bourne says, "An American town, large enough to contain a fairly complete representation of the different types of people and social organization and classes, and yet not so large that individualities are submerged in the general mass, or the line between the classes blurred and made indistinct, is a real epitome of American life."<sup>1</sup>

Vachel Lindsay

<sup>1</sup>. Randolph S. Bourne "The Social Order in an American Town" Sat. R.L.C. v 8:613 / Mar. 26, 1932

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## PREFACE

The village to be dealt with in the following discussion is not a place of definite population , dated by its number of modern improvements, nor typed by its occupations. The size of the town will range from small Greenford to large - sized Zenith ; the occupations vary from coal-mining to farming ; social life may consist of bicycle parties in the evening or lectures on Higher Learning ; the town may be in the era of horse -drawn carriages or in the era of red automobiles. These differences are only secondary to the Spirit of the village, for that is essentially the same, whether the village be on a mountain side in Vermont, or near an industrial center in Illinois.

That " there is some bad in the best of us " is an old adage and - quite possibly- true. The small town has its share of "bad ", but the good qualities do much to overcome the bad. The village is certain to live on as a symbol of friendly democracy. Randolph S. Bourne says, " An American town , large enough to contain a fairly complete representation of the different types of people and social organization and classes, and yet not so large that individualities are submerged in the general mass, or the line between the classes blurred and made indistinct, is a real epitome of American Life." <sup>1</sup>

1. Randolph S. Bourne " The Social Order in an American Town"  
Sat. R.Lit. v 8:613 ( Mar. 26,1932)

REVIEW

notasueak yniwollet edt ni dñeis tiseeb edt ogalliv edt  
yedan eti qd bedab , woltaineq ejintib to ooniq a Jon et  
oif . snoidequco eti qd bedab non , sñpñmewoqmi nñlbow lo  
- equal et biolasset ifans mñt egarr ifile mñt edt to eais  
et jñrñm-losco mñt qmav snoidequco edt ; dñmels heila  
etj ni seitibaq eleqoid to dñlanoz yam etiñ laicos ; animat  
ni ed yam mñt edt ; gainviseq ralqiq no esimod to yineve  
- adus ber to sita edt ni no segalura amarib- eried to sita edt  
sirios edt od yishkoos qlo etiñ seconetilib eadit , esilidom  
odj tentedw, emka edt vilaliknoce et jñd eti ogalliv edt lo  
feliqcaubai na tsen to , inoriteq ni ebis nñdum a no ed ogalliv  
, sionill ni qñpere  
blo na et " si lo jñd etj ni bad emos al etred " jañt  
etj san mñt ifans edt , emid -yldissaq ejipp - lna egypt  
emocriero od dñum ob seitibang booy edt jñd , " bad " lo etame  
lo fomrya a na no evif od nñdum eti ogalliv edt , bad eti  
nñdum na " , ayas emmox , & deñomish - yldissaq vilalik  
- esimod et ejalqos ejial a nñdum od yishko egral , mñt  
nñdum jñd laicos lna ejipq lo segyr sñpñmewi edt lo hñd  
etx seidilahibibai jañt ejral eti Jon Jay lns , esesiaq bas  
esesiaq edt nñdum eti eti , suan latency edt ni hegdomda  
nñdum lo smotlaq lñs a al , jñntetibai abas lns feruid  
I " eti

For an analysis of the " Village Controversy ", it is better that the authors be considered not chronologically but from the standpoint of their position. In this discussion, the attack by Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis will precede the defense by William Allen White, Newton Booth Tarkington, and Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Actually the defenders had not waited for the attack for White and Tarkington had been defending the village for over twenty years before the attack reached its peak. With the treatment of the subject thus compactly organized, an objective analysis may be made of the representative authors. Through them, the village will either retain its reputation as a friendly democracy or sink to the level of a virus.

This is by no means an exhaustive study of the subject; that would have been impossible in a paper of this scope. However a sincere effort has been made to select those books which will most represent the " Controversy over the American Village ".



The small town has long played an important role in our American literature. Captain John Smith, one of our earliest American writers, touched on the theme in 1608 in True Relation, a description of the Jamestown colony. The Journals

**PART I**  
of Governor Myles Standish and Governor Bradford, whether intentionally or not, displayed the "village" in all its glory - and sometimes degradation even though "the first settlements, towns, or colonies were built in the woods, or on the banks

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**  
of a river as an appropriate nucleus for a compact community, gave them but the very outline of an indigenous life."<sup>1</sup> During

the 18th century, the village was enlarged upon in the Goldsmithian style, and generally in poetry, descriptive of the standardized village with its church, its school-house, its community life. This type of literature culminated in The American Village (1772) of Philip Freneau, widely acclaimed as a poem.

Frenaeus's purpose was to "describe the manners of the people." "Describe the village, rising on the green,  
Its harmless people, born to small command,  
Lost in the bosom of this western land."<sup>2</sup>

At the turn of the century the pastoral village was presented as an American Utopia by one of the "Fartford Wits" Timothy Dwight, author of our first long "small town" poem, intended Greenfield Hill "as a revelation of the glory and sweetness to be found in his Connecticut town. That Dwight

<sup>1</sup> Dernotina, H. THE SMALL TOWN IN AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> PATTON, GENE ED. THE POEMS OF PHILIP FRENNEAU AND OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. 1937. P. 75.

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QUALITY NOT SO HIGH

The small town has long played an important role in our American literature. Captain John Smith, one of our earliest American writers, touched on the theme in 1608 in True Relations, a description of the Jamestown colony. The Journals of Governor Winthrop and Governor Bradford, whether intentionally or not, displayed the "village" in all its glory - and sometimes degradation even though, "The first settlements, towns, or colonies founded by the seashore, or on the banks of a river as an approximation of a compact community, gave them but the vaguest promise of an indigenous life."<sup>1</sup> During the 18th century, the village was enlarged upon in the Goldsmithian style, and generally in poetry, descriptive of the standardized village with its church, its school-house, its community life. This type of literature culminated in The American Village (1772) of Philip Freneau, widely acclaimed as a poet.

Freneau's purpose was to throw further light on the  
" Describe the village, rising on the green,  
Its harmless people, born to small command,  
Lost in the bosom of this western land."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Herron, Ina H. The Small Town in American Literature, p.8
2. Pattee, F.L. ed. The Poems of Philip Freneau, Poet of the American Revolution III, p.382 ff.

two ni elot inspezioni na bayisa gnef emt pwof lliame mi  
desifas two lo uno etimia niot nizqas lewawesil illoqas  
Amalik ni BOBI ni ement eft no hancos , stedew nacisem  
elzamol ent uholos nwojast edd lo noijitoseb a snoid  
-nacisem tencue , trichew nacisem has qowitaw nacisem lo  
bas - qida eft illi ni "egalliv" edd bayalqasib Jon ro vilu  
, amalikies jarii edd ", qyord neve nojshbergah zanliem  
etid edd no ro , exorisse edd vd beharoi nacisem ro , anow  
evsy optimunno desjor a lo nojshmincoqa ne es chivit a lo  
galmu f " . etil amalikibni na lo ssioron deesgev edd tud medd  
-bien edd ni noqz begaline raw sysilliv edd , qymnen rial edd  
edt lo evitajoseb , qyord ni tikkunay bas , qida nacisem  
etil , sanor-foorsa etil , qyord etil hdiw egalliv beharoi nacisem  
edt ni beharoi nacisem tikkunay lo eqyt zim " . etil tikkunay  
benlelosa qlefir useney qiling lo ( SWI ) egalliv nacisem

leqz n es  
od raw evitajoseb z'usensil  
etid eti no yaliat , egalliv eri edd etid  
-nacisem lliame of etid , qyord nacisem eti  
" . beal nacisem sind lo mosoo eti ni jaod  
raw egalliv fatojosaq eti warfis edd lo arid eti ja  
" adiW Mirkofor Mirkofor " edt lo uno ro alqoq usitremA ne es beharoi  
" neoc " raw lliame " gnef jarii mo lo qodum , qyord kijomT  
lis yodq eti lo nojshlever , es lith blefinesil beharoi  
drilwg jadT , rawf fuzulcemis sind mi banch ed od usenewe

B.o , usenewe nacisem alqoq eti . H anil , noril , f  
eti lo usenewe , qyord qiling lo amas pwof eti , be , I , M , etid , S  
TT SEC.U,TIT nojshlever nacisem

failed in presenting a " revelation " to America does not alter the fact that the small town was still a matter for literary endeavor. In fact, Dwight's Greenfield Hill, the scene of unbelievable enterprise, democracy, economy and happiness, may be considered as a general description of the towns and villages of New England; those only excepted, which are either economical, new, or situated on barren soil." <sup>3</sup>

The impression must not be given that all village literature upheld the small town. On the contrary, many were sensitive to the deficiencies, the faults, of the town. John Trumbull, a member of the Hartford Wita who attempted to place literary style and content on a higher scale, burlesqued in poetry the New England town meeting as an extravagant absurdity where the town fathers,

"----met, made speeches full long-winded.<sup>4</sup>  
Resolved, protested and rescinded."

M'Fingal was widely read, thus throwing further light on the town as a topic in American literature.

James Fenimore Cooper and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were outstanding in their portrayal of the small town. The Pioneers (1823), by Cooper, is a study (as Richard Henry Dana Sr. remarked in a letter to the author) " of a newly settled village in a new country. Such motley company huddled together, yet all distinctly marked and individual, and everyone as busy as can be as always is the case in such a place."<sup>5</sup>

3. Herron, op.cit. p.39

4. Trumbull, John M'Fingal, p.21

5. Herron, op.cit., p.163



Longfellow's Kavanaugh (1849) is impressionistic in its political views on the town of New England.

After the Civil War, travel rapidly became an important factor in American life. The frontier was pushed Westward to the Pacific, new lands were opened up, great opportunities became known. Yet despite the wide travel, the literature was obviously local, each author presenting the local color of his special community, sincerely proud of the home-town. Of the local colorists, Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins Freeman are considered precursors of the " defense of the village" movement.

At the same time, the growing power of machinery was threatening the independence of the individual. Men long accustomed to self-sufficiency were pessimistically kowtowing to the domination of industry. The trend in literature echoed the economic trend.

Naturalism of a socialistic and psychological type became rampant, and the small town received its share of dissection. Stephen Crane revealed the erudition of small town life in all its nakedness. But the advent of Edgar Watson Howe into the literary world had a startling effect which culminated in the vituperative work of Edgar Lee Masters. Howe's The Story of a Country Town (1883), according to Carl Van Doren in his Many Minds, " broke a pattern and shouldered its way among the fragments. "<sup>6</sup> The dreary village life of the late nineteenth century Midwest is revealed

6. Herron, op. cit. p.209



frankly and with sardonic humor." While Miss Jewitt was still writing in kindly manner about quiet New England villages, Howe was exposing an entirely different order of town life ---. It [his work] lacked the traditional glorification of village virtues. Instead it grimly portrayed the most unpromising of small town living conditions -----. With bluntness of language, Howe contemptuously presented the men of his town as overbearing, argumentative, and exacting, yet woefully futile and discontented ---. Lacking positive opinions of their own, they were nevertheless full of self-conceit over their petty affairs.<sup>7</sup>

Mark Twain continued the vicious onslaught against village tradition in The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg (1899) " a melancholy record of the effect of greed on the ordinary amenities of life."<sup>8</sup> The meanness and hypocrisy of a supposedly incorruptible village are uncovered for the public eye to see.

In comparison with the effect upon the American literary realm of The Story of a Country Town , Edger Lee Masters' Spoon River Anthology ( 1915 ) had the report of a bomb. The anthology lays bare the secrets of the village dead. as each villager speaks from his tomb. Masters himself tells the purpose of the anthology :

" the interwoven history of a whole community , a village, a city, or whatever you like to call it ----. I had a variety of things in mind in the writing of the anthology. I meant to

7. ibid , p.209

8. Blankenship,Russell American Literature , p.462



analyze character, to satirize society, to tell a story, to expose the machinery of life , to present to view a working model of the big world and put it in a window where the passerby could stop and see it run. And I had in mind, too, the creation of beauty and the depiction of our sorrows and hopes, our religious failures, successes and visions, our poor little lives, rounded by sleep, in language, and figures emotionally tuned to bring all of us together in understanding and affection."<sup>9</sup>

Masters revolts against all that is hypocritical in the village life. He tears down the veil of conventionality leaving bare the inner thoughts which often reek with sordidness. His work has done much toward disproving that small towns are indicative of happiness, honest thrift and virtue. The real effect of Masters' work was not seen at once, for it appeared at a time of great political and economic upheaval - the World War I. After the war, however, the theme was carried forth in the movement known as The Battle of the Village. The post-war period marked the removal ( for the nonce) of economic and social problems thus removing the subject of the Naturalistic " problem " novels so prevalent before the war. But criticism was inbred in the " literaries " for no longer able to criticize political and social affairs, they turned at once to a criticism of the cultural life of the small village. Masters' Spoon River was the inspiration for many vituperative assaults on village life.

ot . Vtode a llet of , qjelcoz esitidae et , nejotatoz ergizim  
gulidow a weiv et dnezzaq et , etli to guramka etz esozhe  
etd erode wobniw et ni si juz has blrow aid etd to lebem  
, god , hulm et has I has . but ti esa has qote blwoz ydrenzaq  
has exomia mo lo noisoblyh etd has ydrenzaq to noldezi etd  
mo , encliv has aseacocu , sevill etzilien mo , neqod  
enqifit has , agsugnal ni , ceela yd behmet , sevill elddif zeq  
grubastemba etz tenegeod us lo lliq qalid et beuas ylensolome  
", noisellis has  
etd ni laobizengyi et jadd lliq jenlaga adloven wobnash  
ylensolomevnoz lo lliq etd zwob zinef et , etli egsifiv  
Hilw xesn medje holidz zognoz temi etd etnd ykysyef  
Hilwa jadd ylensolomevnoz durow erob etd blrow etli . asemblance  
. encliv has ilimij zecnol , esenqqaq lo svjedzibni esa erowd  
etd , sono ja neez Jon saw blrow 'arejek to jecfis fad etd  
olmoncas has facitibq jaeng lo esir a ja heissqua il  
etd , reveword raw etd metia . I raw blrow etd - lsvrediq  
etjida etd ee zwona dnezzom etd ni djjid belimec has erowd  
etd ) favomen etd haxiam bofraq raw-dsoq etd . egsifiv etd lo  
galivomer andz amelidom faisoa has olmoncas lo ( sonon etd  
-aveng etd zilev " meidom " ojellemud etd lo jecfus etd  
-etxetif " etd ni beroni saw maliqim jad , raw etd etoled jad  
faisoa has facitibq saloljits etd regol on etd " zek  
laendic etd lo maloljits a etd sono ja hanru yad , skilts  
etd raw revim noeqq 'arejek , egsifiv ilimij etd lo etli  
, etli egsifiv no adlasses evitaisqiv ynam etd noisutqani

This new type of criticism was psychological in its subject, naturalistic in its treatment. Our traditional Puritanism was discovered to be narrow-minded puritanism; thrift was displayed as stinginess ; respectability in the eyes of the attackers became merely superficial conformity,not virtue; the good-fellowship was presented as back-slapping joviality; "folksiness " was one of the many forms of " nosyness ";the pioneer spirit of optimism had degenerated into a blatant "defense mechanism".

" But the chief criticism was leveled at dullness,' the village virus'. The pioneer had assiduously uprooted from his society every vestige of aristocracy, but no upper class trait was more relentlessly exterminated than was that of independence of thought. Lacking the secure sanction of name and family tradition for his thinking, the pioneer instinctively sought sanction in the solidarity of his group. Few ideas and speculations were tolerated that could not gain the understanding approval of the mass. This fact caused the intellectual life of the village to settle on a rather low level. The ambitious and the intellectually restless left the small town for the city. The cultural centers of the East were all well acquainted with the 'back trailers' of the middle border', and the left bank of the Seine knew a few of the most adventurous. But the home villages slumbered on generation after generation with little sign of change." 10

The critics of the post-war era were H.L. Mencken, Jean

.doedza est ni ischgoedzaq saw maloizis te egypt wan aint  
 malnating lancitibarid mo , inmenseid est ni odielisurcan  
 -sib saw dilius; malnating babnik-worren ed od benevolent saw  
 end to egypt est ni qifidalecquer ; assignate to hysqiq  
 qifidalecquer , qifidalecquer Ischitiquez ylster umased arendads  
 qifidalecquer griffes-kodz as bednaseen saw qifidalecquer-hood est  
 aint;" azaryon " lo swiñt ylster est lo uno saw " schenidofot"  
 sindalid a cniñ fedstenegeb bad maimiqo "lo dilius reenig  
 "mainnance canetab"  
 est "asenilip" as believe saw maloizis telis est uap "  
 est mort hafocqua qifidalecquer bad reenig est ."enqiv asiliv  
 tient assis usqqa en uo , "cosmoclaus to righter ylster qifidalec  
 schenidofot lo sind saw hafz fedstenegeb ylsterdneker saw saw  
 ylster hafz saw to noitonaq excess edd galibad , qifidalecquer to  
 dylgues qifidalecquer reenig est qifidalecquer est to noitonaq  
 -usqqa has usabi wet .quoy sin lo qifidalecquer est ni noitonaq  
 galibastrechon est nisy too filwoj jard bednasek etew maloizis  
 estiñ lafcoiffant est beusco jard sind .azay est lo favoures  
 encoidims est .levef wol reidz e no aifres od egifiliv est to  
 est not nowd llyra est jtef assilier vilaincillecul est has  
 bednasek llyra llyra etew qifidalecquer to creches famillio est .qifid  
 alecquer est has "reptor sibbim est to tressier road" est qifid  
 alecquer jut , zoutqinevha jaom est lo wet a weml entes est lo krasd  
 dylw noitonaq reffis noitonaq no betendule asgiliv emod  
 of "eguado lo ngis aifris  
 puet , medousk .d.H. etew uo saw-dog est lo coltus est  
 080.9 , dia .90 flesanq qifidalecquer .01

Nathan, Ludwig Lewisohn, Randolph Bourne and Van Wyck Brooks. Sinclair Lewis and Sherwood Anderson, the most famous for their attack on the village, are to be discussed later.

The defenders of the village are really misnamed for they had been writing in praise of the village long before the attackers gained the wide attention of the public. American fiction had symbolized the village as "the natural home of the pleasant virtues". True enough, the farm had often been attacked as a place of perpetual and non-progressive rusticism, but even those daring writers dared not lay "disrespectful hands" upon the village. "It seemed too cosy a microcosm to be disturbed. There it lay in the mind's eye, neat, compact, organized, traditional, the white church its tapering spire, the sober schoolhouse, the smithy of the ringing anvil, the corner grocery, the cluster of friendly houses; the venerable parson, the wise physician, the canny squire, the grasping landlord, softened or outwitted in the end; the village belle, gossip, atheist, idiot; jovial fathers, gentle mothers, merry children; cool parlors, shining kitchens, spacious barns, lavish gardens, fragrant summer dawns, and comfortable winter evenings. These were images not to be discarded lightly -----." <sup>11</sup>

Thus was the small town presented, by Riley, by Meredith Nicholson, by Zona Gale. The chief adherents to the defense movement, William Allen White, Booth Tarkington, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, are to be discussed later.



## PART III

## THE ATTACK

Order of Books

1. Tinsbury, Ohio (1919)

2. The Midwest Childhood  
(1926)

II THAT

KODAKA MINT

### SHERWOOD ANDERSON

The revolt from the village in American fiction began essentially with Edgar Lee Masters' Spoon River Anthology (1915). It is an expression of criticism of everything leaning toward the complacent, the optimistic, the sentimental. Spoon River is "SHERWOOD ANDERSON" the greed and hypocrisy, the dullness and ugliness to be found underneath the cover of peace and contentment in the small town.

This theme was brought to a climax in the prose fiction of Sherwood Anderson. Like many other modern writers, Anderson lived in the section of the Order of Books he selected,

one of a large family, he drifted so one day to his town where he became a laborer. After taking part in the Spanish-American war, he tried job after job in the mills, working and managing a paint factory. His inability to find happiness and contentment in any job convinced him that such happiness as served his fellow Americans was not for him. He at last found self-expression in writing, through which he could set forth creative art and beauty. Contacts with Dreiser, Hesse and Dostoevsky launched him on a literary career. Even in his first stories he showed his interest in the psychological aspects of life rather than plot; in the nobility of passion and tragedy rather than conventions. In all of his stories he expresses his own conviction that "literature is not a means of escape from life; all good works of art take you back into

1. Winesburg, Ohio (1919)

2. Tar, A Midwest Childhood

(1926)

SHREWDROP ANDERSON

Object of note

(after) ~~the~~ ~~mining~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~area~~  
is ~~the~~ ~~mining~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~area~~  
(see)

## SHERWOOD ANDERSON

The revolt from the village in American fiction began essentially with Edgar Lee Masters' Spoon River Anthology (1915). It is an expression of criticism of everything leaning toward the complacent, the optimistic, the sentimental. Spoon River is a poetic revelation of the greed and hypocrisy, the dullness and ugliness to be found underneath the cover of peace and contentment in the small town.

This theme was brought to a climax in the prose fiction of Sherwood Anderson. Like many other Midland writers, Anderson lived in the section of the country of which he writes. One of a large family, he drifted to Chicago in his teens where he became a laborer. After taking part in the Spanish-American war, he tried job after job including advertising and managing a paint factory. His inability to find happiness and contentment in any job convinced him that such happiness as served his fellow Americans was not for him. He at last found self-expression in writing, through which he could set forth creative art and beauty. Contacts with Dreiser, Hecht and Dill launched him on a literary career. Even in his first stories he showed his interest in the psychological aspects of life rather than plot; in the reality of passion and tragedy rather than conventions. In all of his stories he expresses his own conviction that "Literature is not a means of escape from life; all good works of art take you back into



<sup>1</sup> your own life." Most of his stories and novels are about heroes who have the same thoughts as he. Men ought to be " full of vitality, full of beauty and heroism. Anderson went beyond the revolt from the village to an imaginative criticism of the whole American world." <sup>2</sup> His warning was chiefly against over-surety and smugness in men's opinions.

Fred Lewis Pattee sums up Anderson in these words :

" Anderson is a paradox in our hopeful America, a literary agnostic, an intellectual hobo, a grown man still adolescent, an agitator with no program, a poet soul with no foundation, a romanticist turned cynic ---. Such men build no foundations. They stir the water to muddiness but they do nothing permanent." <sup>3</sup>

Winesburg, Ohio was as familiar to Anderson as Spoon River was to Edgar Lee Masters. But Anderson's treatment of the village was not so vitriolic as Masters' had been. The central character in Winesburg, Ohio ( 1919 ) is George Willard, a young reporter about to leave his native town. He doesn't necessarily hate the village but feels cramped by its repressed life and would seek adventure and fame in a thriving metropolis. During the remainder of his time in Winesburg he discovers many " secrets " which explain sympathetically the actions of its inhabitants. The book contains a number of these " secrets " but the characters are so warped and scarred by handicaps within and without

1. Bond, George " Sherwood Anderson Chats about Books " Dallas Morning News mag.sec. p.3 ( October 18, 1925 ).
2. Van Doran, Carl The American Novel p.298
3. Pattee, Fred L. The New American Literature p.337



that they appear as the writer suggests , mere " grotesques of real life. "

Wing Biddlebaum was just such a grotesque. His poetic expressive handshad caused his discharge as school teacher in a Pennsylvania town. Not only was he discharged but he was chased from the village - a ~~fire~~ force vengeful mob at his heels - all because he expressed himself through the " caress in his fingers ". An idiot boy had dreamed horrible things of the teacher's hands and told the dream as a fact.<sup>4</sup>

As Wing Biddlebaum represents a " distinguished figure " of the village, so Curtis Hartman represents its religion. Minister of the Presbyterian Church, he had developed an imposing congregation. Despite the lack of keen worship in his parish, he nevertheless had no enemies. Yet the sight of a woman so preyed on his mind that he changed from a pious son of God to a worshiper of the Devil. The result was his tumultuous speech to George Willard.

" The ways of God are beyond human understanding. I have found the Light. After ten years in this town, God has manifested himself to me in the body of a woman. She is an instrument of God, bearing the message of truth."<sup>5</sup> Thus Rev. Curtis Hartman prepared himself for spreading the word of God after the revelation, made manifest through the body of a Winesburg school teacher!

Many other pictures of Winesburg folk are offered, showing how the cramped atmosphere of the town is inducive to inhi-

4. Winesburg, Ohio "Hands" p.7 ff

5. ibid "The Strength of God" p.182

supposing " orient , swagga wediu edd as meqqo yeti said  
" atif laer lo  
olicoz zir supposing a . Now Jewl as mideibhiS gniW  
advised loocra as eyrareib zir because badebned evlaesrixe  
zir hui hegwardain or raw vico zot . wot alnavlannet zir ni  
zir ja dom intiegney coriat a - egsifiv edd mort besano asw  
asocie " edd rhamut llemid besocrixe ed causaod lis - alid  
agnid idlition beruech had you foibh nA ." stegnif alid ni  
" . Just a as meatib edd blod has abrid addressed edd to  
" emgft berisipunib " a chnaseqet mideibhiS gniW za  
mohafat zir adrasceret namjish eljwot as , egsifiv edd lo  
na heqleib edd as , dawod namjipupas edd to refelit  
al qiderow need to kool edd ejigaez . mohagegrynoz gnisogni  
to Juhis edd JeY . selmane on bad aslefdeveren ed , during zir  
awolg a mort beginne edd tait brain alid no hysenq as nemow a  
and saw siner edT . lived edd to neqilator a of bob to nor  
, Brailin egsif edd fleshez amodLitter  
ewaf I . anibasturzib namut incyed ems hot to eyaw edT "  
and bob , myed zir al aisey nef redA . figAI edd hanot  
ne ci edz . nemow a to yhod em al em of llemid heqelism  
andT " . dined to eyasem edd galized , bob to chenwirian  
bow edd galized zot llemid begining namjish zir aye  
edd dywomis testifim sham , mohalever edJ . tejle bob to  
predosed loocra gnisogni a to yhod  
anwodis , berelle ems alot gnisogni to aemdoig rento yhod  
-tink or svleubai al awod edd to eyasemda biquato edd wot  
at v.g " emgft " olfoalid , a  
ssi.q " bob to segment edT zid , a

bitions and morbid introspections. The hotel proprietor's unhappy wife, the middle aged doctor, the man of ideas, the telegraph operator who had been disillusioned in love; all are presented at a highly emotional moment so their very souls are laid bare to the reader. These people struggled as best they can to rise from their moral and intellectual decrepitude, but in the end sink back to their former passive state.

Tar, A Midwest Childhood (1926) is the story of Anderson's own childhood in a small Ohio town. It is a description of Tar Moorehead's life from four years of age to early adolescence. His father is lazy, garroous and lovable, and a decided contrast to Tar's beautiful silent mother. The book is greatly concerned with the sex life of its characters, but as a young boy would see it. The repressed atmosphere of the town acts as a psychological incentive for Tar. He found from observation of his mother and father that in Winesburg "a woman, when she has kids, when her man isn't a good provider, gets the worst of it." Dick Moorehead was often invited out for meals, but Mary Moorehead stayed at home to eat bread soaked in drippings rather than spread with butter.

The whole town took much interest in the business controversy between Tar and Hog Hawkins. Hawkins did his best to cheat the boy of the two cents for the newspaper. Tar, in his understanding manner, permitted him to do so "when the

1. *Winesburg, U.S.A.*  
2. *Fathers*. The New American Literature  
3. *Chase, Cleveland, New York*  
*September 1927*



townsfolk wouldn't know." Tar had seen the penny-pinching hog dealer one night praying his dead wife to say a good word in heaven for him that he might get there too. Tar's need for self-support had made him sensitive to the feelings of others and he understood the great loneliness in which Hawkins was living.<sup>6</sup>

The book is actually an introspective auto-biography and rural album of "coarse daguerrectypes illustrating the psychology, the manners, the view of life, the institutions, the personality of an area left behind by a retreating frontier."<sup>7</sup>

In spite of his sympathy towards the folk and place of his school, Anderson portrays them as being so far sunk in the quagmire of futility that they may never formulate articulately the desires that burn within them. It is the consciousness of innane desire that makes them uselessly reckless and spasmodic. Anderson himself is "constantly agitated by a suspicion that life has a meaning that has been concealed from him. He is baffled and worried about idealism, sex, beauty, truth, love, he tortues himself trying to find what it is that man should get out of life. 'I am a lover,' he wails, 'and I have not found my thing to love---. I am a confused child in a confused world.' That in itself is a rather serious defect in a writer; frustrated lovers and confused children don't often see life in a wholly illuminating manner."<sup>8</sup>

6. ibid p.309

7. Pattee, The New American Literature p.333

8. Chase, Cleveland "Sherwood Anderson" Sat. Review of Lit. 4:129-30 (Sept. 24, 1927)



### SINCLAIR LEWIS

Sinclair Lewis attacked the village of American fiction with a vengeance. Where Anderson had at least felt sympathy for the failings of the village, Lewis had only a satiric contempt. Through his ridicule of village life he soon became leader of the revolters. Lewis spent the first eighteen years of his life in Sauk Center, Minnesota, a small prairie town, "where the old-fashioned, kindly, neighborly, democratic virtues are presumed to thrive in a congenial habitat."<sup>1</sup>

Having received the "culture" Order of Books necessary in the form of a degree from Yale, he became  
 1. Main Street (1920) - jack-of-all-trades; janitor -colonial experimental Helicon Hall, reporter, magazine editor, manuscript reader, stagecoach and stageway traveler to Canada, Mexico, Europe and elsewhere; a free lance in California with William Rose Benét, and magazine story writer are a few of his professional experiences. His earlier novels - "in exemplification of the thesis that the genus Americanus is cousin germane to the sooty, Mr. Mencken's lately discovered boobus Americanus"<sup>2</sup> are indicative of his hatred of small town dullness, which culminated in full force in Main Street.

Lewis's great literary power lies in his photographic accuracy in description, his ability to mimic brutally, his tireless energy in searching out the commonplace. He believes that "the whole world is being leveled by the march of

1. Perrington, Vernon  
2. Perrington, V.P.  
Vol.III p.365

Critical Realism in America p.364  
Main Currents in American Thought

• 88  
FILM PLATE

place to hold

• Main Street (1920)

(1922) • Happy

## S I N C L A I R   L E W I S

Sinclair Lewis attacked the village of American fiction with a vengeance. Where Anderson had at least felt sympathy for the failings of the village, Lewis had only a satiric contempt. Through his ridicule of village ways he soon became leader of the revolters. Lewis spent the first eighteen years of his life in Sauk Center, Minnesota, a small prairie town, " where the old-fashioned, kindly, neighborly, democratic virtues are presumed to thrive in a congenial habitat." <sup>1</sup> Having received the " culture " he thought necessary in the form of a degree from Yale, he began a literary career as jack-of-all-trades; " janitor -colonist at Upton Sinclair's experimental Helicon Hall, reporter, magazine editor, manuscript reader, steerage and stowaway traveler to Panama, Mexico, Europe and elsewhere, a free lancer in California with William Rose Benet, and magazine story writer" are a few of his professional experiences. His earlier novels - " in exemplification of the thesis that the genus Americanus is cousin germain to the scoffing Mr. Mencken's lately discovered boobus Americanus" <sup>2</sup> are indicative of his hatred of small town dullness, which culminated in full force in Main Street.

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1. Parrington, Vernon  
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machines into one monotonous uniformity, before which all the individual colors and graces and prides and habits flee - or would flee if there were any asylum still uninvaded ----. The ~~villages~~ of the Middle west ---- have been conquered and converted by the legions of mediocrity, and now, grown rich and vain, are setting out to carry the dingy banner led by the booster's calliope, and the evangelist's bass drum, farther than it has ever gone before - to make provincialism imperialistic; so that all the native and instinctive virtues, freedom, powers , must rally in their own defense."<sup>3</sup>

Lewis, along with other revolters from the village virus, directed his scorn toward the uniformity which had invaded the small town and was then spreading outward toward the larger towns. The Great God Success, intellectual mediocrity, and excessive conventionality received their share of criticism. The reading public pounced upon Main Street as an open expression of what they believed they had unconsciously felt as a result of the inclusive"standardization."

The story of Main Street is mediocre enough : Carol Milford, one year out of college and, typically, yearning to do great things, marries good-hearted practical Dr. Will Kennicott of Gopher Prairie, Minnesota. Carol, in her intense dislike of the environment, attempts unsuccessfully, to improve the town. Her " fling of defiance " is spent in a year's war work in Washington. Finally, however, she returns

3. Van Doran, Carl. Contemporary American Novelists p.162



to her husband, realizing that his love is stronger than her antipathy although she is still rebellious at the complacency of the small town.

In Main Street we see Mr. Lewis as " one of the millions of Americans who had come to think of their villages as dull in comparison with the more variegated worlds spread before them by newspapers, motion pictures, excursions in train or automobile. He was one of the thousands who had left their villages and with more distaste than homesickness remembered them in difficult but exciting cities. For all his gifts of expression, he was very near the run of the newer order of Americans in his specific resentments and his implied censures of the village. " <sup>4</sup>

In the foreward to the novel, Lewis says,

" This is America - a town of a few thousand, in a region of wheat and corn, and dairies and little groves.

" The town is , in our tale, called ' Gopher Prairie, Minnesota.' But its Main Street is the continuation of Main Street everywhere. The story would be the same in Ohio or Montana , in Kansas or Kentucky or Illinois, and not very differently would it be told Up New York State or in the Carolina Hills. " <sup>5</sup>

Lewis made his Gopher Prairie - which was a " continuation " of Gopher Prairie everywhere - dusty, smug, complacent and incapable of seeing possible changes for the better. His Carol Kennicott, says Van Doran, was not a genius. A genius

4. Van Doran,C. and Taylor,H. Sinclair Lewis pp 38,39

5. Main Street, foreword



in like situation would have been drawn to the " bright foot-lights and fleshpots. " But Carol was superior to the village level only in her " virtue of discontent." At the last she yielded like any classic heroine struggling against her environment. She still maintained, though - and Mr. Lewis agreed with her - that her discontent had been virtue, not crime or folly. The villain of the piece had been the dullness of Gopher Prairie.<sup>6</sup>

The dullness is made evident in Will Kennicott's description of his home town to Carol :

" I never saw a town that had such up and coming people as Gopher Prairie. Bresnahan - you know - the famous auto manufacturer - he comes from Gopher Prairie. Born and brought up there ! And its a darn pretty town. Lots of fine maples and boxelders, and there's two of the dandiest lakes you ever saw, right near town ! And we've got even miles of cement walks already and building more everyday ---. Gopher Prairie is going to have a great future. Some of the best dairy and wheat land in the state right near there - some of it selling right now at one- fifty an acre , and I bet it will go up to two and a quarter in ten years. "<sup>7</sup>

In spite of Kennicott's eager description Carol saw Gopher Prairie as " unprotected and unprotecting ; there was no dignity in it nor any hope of greatness. Only the tall red grain rose from the mass. It was a frontier- camp. It was not a place to live in, not possibly, not conceivably.

6. Van Dorn, C. Sinclair Lewis p.23

7. Main Street p. 14

-jail jd. " add of awarb need even binow noisnsta off al  
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The people - they'd be as drab as their houses , as flat as their fields." <sup>8</sup> She found out about the people shortly as she watched a scene in pantomime often to be repeated - " a man in cuffless shirt sleeves with pink arm garters, wearing a linen collar but no tie , yawned his way from Dyer's Drug Store across to the hotel. He leaned against the wall, scratched a while, sighed, and in a bored way gossiped with a man tilted back in his chair. " <sup>9</sup> Where now was Kennicott's boast of the up- and- coming Gopherites ?

Failing in reformative measures for the town, rebellious Carol urges travel upon her harassed husband as a means of culture. She had long wanted a trip through the East. However, again her husband's prosaic mind refused to admit such a need although he glibly promised her they would do the East " up brown " after he attended the convention of the American Medical Association. He knew New York " clear through " having spent not quite a week there. But the trip was postponed perpetually and Carol had to give up her dreams of looking at Emerson's manse, or bathing in a " surf of jade and ivory " , or wearing a " trottoir and a summer fur." <sup>10</sup>

The stuffiness of the small town, according to Lewis, is revealed in the case of Fern Mullins, dishonorably discharged from the teaching staff for hawing gone to a dance with a fellow given to drink. His pious mother insisted he'd never been drunk before - excepting a few times when she'd smelt

8. ibid. pp 26-27

9. ibid p. 34

10. ibid p. 300

as dalf se , esenom bland as denr se af b'gari - siqeq sif  
 an gildur siqeq eit dueda jno hawol edd " shifit thit  
 - Delsaqet ed of nedlo emodnaq ni ence a bedocaw ads  
 vrodeg vis daty datt verreis dulis eselme ni dat a "  
 moni yav sid heway , sic on riu uifio manif a yirine  
 feninge bensel ek .fletur ed of enonc erod grotz a  
 viseq ges hanc a ni bus , bengis , altnw a bedocaw , llaw edd  
 saw von eried " , rians ait ni Rost Regis usq a fidu beg  
 t medredos primos -tis -qu edd to vissed v'jtosimik  
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 qid edd una .erent neew a edua Jon Jhona galved " dygnis  
 red qu evig ed bed foiso l'as v'l'f'z'edeqoq benoqeq aw  
 l'isa " a ni aniddeq to , kann a l'osmidaq ja q'nikoi to amemb  
 neew a bus diodotu " a galvesu no , " yrovi l'as sbet lo  
 of " , ut  
 ai , zlweq of galvucc , nwoq l'isa edd to amembneq edd  
 bespradostib v'f's'z'edeqoq , emilum nra' i6 v'oso edd ni reisever  
 a fidu sonat a of enc , galved tol T'asa q'nikoseq edd moni  
 reien b'ed bedocaw v'f's'z'edeqoq ait .t'ishq of nevig v'f's'z'  
 l'isa b'edu nedu nemli yet a galvucc - eroted m'ruh uad

"likker " on his breath after he'd been out all night. Even then, of course, she explained he'd had a good excuse for the other boys had persuaded him. " Anway, " she concluded, " never before had her boy fallen into the hands of a designing woman!" As a result of Fern's leading great, hulking Cy Bogart astray, she was asked to resign her position ; and although Sam Clark emphatically said , " We're-not- making - no - charges - whatever ! " the poor girl was refused even admittance into teacher's agencies on the strength of her escapade.<sup>11</sup> The future for Fern Mullins seemed to be marriage with a fellow who loved her , but was stupid he made her scream.

After her venture in Washington, Carol came to the realization that she was just one more stenographer there while in " G.P. " she was considered, however mistakenly, " a city girl." So she returned to the place where a good life was spent in " making a comfy home and bringing up some cute kids and knowing some nice homey people. "<sup>12</sup>

Babbitt is another challenge to the pattern set for the American business man by fiction. In this novel again, as in Main Street , Lewis rebels against " middle aged romanticism, narrow convention, and blatant optimism. "<sup>13</sup> Although Zenith is rated as a small city, it still holds the provincial standards of a Gopher Prairie. Babbitt, himself, is the synthesis of the city in which he lives. He prided himself in being typical of ideal American manhood ; a " God fearing, hustling, successful two- fisted regular guy, who belongs to

11. Ibid Chapt. 32 p 382 ff.

12. Ibid p 9

13. Herron op cit p 385

nevá „jigla lie iwo good b'ad rafit'a díserd zif no " mawil"   
 zif noz smucke boog a b'ad b'ad bedisalqka oia ,zimco lo qnedt  
 nevan "behaviour oia" ,yewna ? mid behavouraq had syod rafit'a  
 qalingiseb s lo abnud oia cimi nellat yod raf had elicited  
 drageg to gainful ,jeung gnibei sturt' to díserd s za "usow  
 dýgorifile bus ; notifioq red nýse rof bennu saw oia  
 - on - problem - don - er - tew" , biss qlymipqneq saw Círa  
 -time neva haunter saw lily roqq edf " ; rafwet - wírdar  
 li ,chayoso red lo dýgert'a end no celoneg a'poxaq oia connt  
 a dýfi agalrak ed of b'masez anfifit' nñed nof studit edf  
 amerso red ebam ed b'igur saw fird , red bevol oia wallet  
 edf of emia ló-oy ,notignizan ni emunet ten medla  
 eienf redqzqneqz exom ero rafit' saw oia haid maledizinen  
 ,vñelidzim nevow ,behaviour oia oia " ,a.b " nj rafit'a  
 boog a erand eoziq edf of hñazurit oia oia " ,luy vala "   
 qu antialid bus emia qimco a qatirat" , si zibog-ssu still  
 si " ,zlocenqysmor soim emos galwomz bus qlymipqneq emos  
 end nof jas nñcting edf of egneffido redions of schlader  
 nt ze ,qilys levan midf of .zidofit' yd nam esauled malediz  
 ,maledizinen bega elbbia " zedings afeder siwed , desir piam  
 dñmes dñpedita" ,zimindje jnsajeld bus ,holznevnoz wortian  
 felonivomz edf ebior lilye of qylo illema s do bader si  
 si si ,zisemid ,zidofit' ,zidias redqz s lo abnudz  
 lisemid bader si ,ebior ed bader si qylo edf lo abnudz  
 qylozqz bus " ; beoniam pacivemk Isaboi to Isabiqq qnied si  
 of synofied oda ,qylo zifqet Isaboi nowz lñzazene ,qalidem

a church with pep and piety in it, who belongs to the Boosters or the Rotarians or the Kiwanis, to the Elks or Moose or Redmen or Knights of Columbus or any of a score of organizations of good jolly, kidding, laughing, sweating, upstanding, lend-a-handing Royal Good Fellows, who plays hard and works hard and whose answer to his critics is a squaretoed boot that'll teach the gourches and smartalecks to respect the heman and get out and root for Uncle Samuel, U.S.A. ! " <sup>14</sup>

This same attitude of independence so heartily expressed in his famous address to the Chamber of Commerce is further seen in his disparaging comment to his wife who eagerly desired " culture ", that nothing prevented her reading books and going to lectures and " all that junk ". But he himself disliked being dragged into cultural atmosphere for he balked quite fiercely at attending Mrs. Opal Emerson Midge's lecture on " Cultivating the Sun Spirit " at the League of the Higher Illumination. " While Mrs. Babbitt was inspired by Opal's speech ( although she wasn't trained in metaphysics and there was a lot " she couldn't quite grasp " ), George Babbitt wanted to know why in the dickens those women wanted to put in their time " listening to that blaa. " <sup>15</sup>

In spite of his ridicule of conventions and the small town way of thinking, Babbitt was glad enough, after his revolt, to crawl back into his shell of peaceful dullness and become again the Good Fellow among Good Fellows although

14. Babbitt p 188  
15. Babbitt p 359



a last rebellious streak rejoiced at his son's revolt against conventional ways.

In the social satire of Main Street and in the satire of the empty pretentiousness of the American Business Man, Lewis has made an attack on the common creed and that attack has been overwhelmingly answered by the critics as Parrington points out.<sup>16</sup> His personal life has been considered as the basis for his distorted view of American ideals. Critics insist he is suffering from an aggravated sense of astigmatism, and that in consequence he does not see eye to eye with normal vision. The world is out of focus to him - " askew in all the structural lines ---. He has deliberately cultivated a spleen that makes him dislike his neighbors because they are comfortable and contented."<sup>17</sup> It is important to realize, above all, that Lewis is a satirist. He gives a diabolical twist to perfectly ordinary doings. For example, surely there is nothing wrong in the good time the Sacred Trinity class of girls had at their " weinerwurst party"? Groups of girls everywhere are doing things just like that and, as a consequence, being admired as versatile and good sports. Lewis, with the rancor of the satirist, makes the affair seem stupid and infantile. So it is throughout his books. His satire is often undeniably justified, and he has stirred up those who would ignore the growing forces of hypocrisy and over-sentimentality. But his work is exaggerated - over drawn - to receive the effect he desired.

16. For an analysis of Lewis' works in relation to his personal life see Parrington, op. cit. pp. 365-366

17. Parrington op. cit. p.365



Critics have claimed his vituperativeness to be a result of his innate jealousy of comfort and content. How far this may be true is difficult to prove; however, his novels do give one the impression of "dwelling upon the horrors of the unsightly scaffolding and forgetting ~~the~~ growing Cathedral beneath." <sup>18</sup>

18. Pattee The New American Literature p. 332

2. Afecto o Brasil ameaçado, que em 1930, quando nasceu  
o Brasil, era um dos países mais ricos do mundo.  
3. O Brasil é um país que tem uma grande  
e rica cultura, com muitos artistas e intelectuais.  
4. O Brasil é um país que tem uma grande  
e rica cultura, com muitos artistas e intelectuais.

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WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE  
PART III

T H E D E F E N S E

Order of topics

1. At the Court of Mayville(1890)
2. A Certain Rich Man (1905)
3. In our Town ( 1906 )
4. In the Heart of a Town(1918)

III THAT

IS DANGEROUS

## WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

William Allen White has long been recognized as a convincing defender of village life and its ideally democratic ways. In all phases of his life - as novelist, publicist, newspaper editor WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE has the inland goodness of the small town, the setting of his work, which is sentimentally local, is the Middle West, and although his work never reaches the height of universality, it has in it a forceful message of the values to be found in the small community.

Order of books

- White is a product of the small towns of Kansas, a "believer in the essential good nature of man," a widely recognized journalist, spokesman for the independence of the small town, and a "defender of the country" has made him an informed and increasingly influential defender of the West -- he has announced through editorial and fiction his faith in the basic excellences of the Middle West and its substantial rural and small town life. Among Kansas citizens and spokesmen White is outstanding as "a builder of a prairie civilization which has gradually assumed the common American shape." Throughout all his work, White maintains a hearty bulging energy, "the courage of his convictions, of all his sentiment, of all his laughter,
1. At the Court of Bayville (1899)
  2. A Certain Rich Man (1906)
  3. In Our Town ( 1906)
  4. In the Heart of a Fool (1918)

YTHW HLLIA MAMHWW

blood to debt

(BRI) efficiency to time off at JA .1

(BRI) self discipline is a .2

(BRI) two or three .3

(BRI) foot's to itself off at .4

## WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

William Allen White has long been recognized as a convincing defender of village life and its ideally democratic ways. In all phases of his life - as novelist, publicist, newspaper editor, he has remained true to the inherent goodness of the small town. The setting of his work, which is admittedly local, is the Middle West, and although his work never reaches the height of universality, it has in it a forceful message of the values to be found in the small community.

White is a product of the puritan middleclass of Kansas, a " believer in the essential good ness of man." <sup>1</sup> As a widely recognized journalist, White has been the " fearless spokesman for the independence of the small town newspaper." His long, close and personal relationship with town and country " has made him an informed and increasingly influen-tial defender of the West" ----." he has announced through editorial and fiction his faith in the basic excellence of the Middle West and its substantial rural and small town life. Among Kansas citizens and spokesmen White is outstanding as " a builder of a prairie civilization which has gradually assumed the common American shape." <sup>2</sup> Throughout all his work, White maintains a hearty bubbling energy , " the courage of his convictions , of all his sentiment, of all his laughter,

1.Vernon L. Parrington Beginnings of Critical Realism in America. p. 374

2. Ima H. Herron Contemporary American Novelists p 134



of all his tears --- a multitude of right instincts and sound feelings." In his stricter hours of work , of which he has many, he applies his " right instincts " and " sound feelings" to the problem of showing the causes of and means by which corruption works in politics and of tracing those effects of private greed which " ruin souls and torture societies."<sup>3</sup>

In his novels of the village, White assumes the same attitude with which he has regarded the small town all his life. He does not presume it to be perfection - rather he presents its faults as its virtues ; he drives overlong on neither aspect. And such an " all-round " point of view is actually most friendly to the village as a part of American national life, for when a picture of the whole is thrown in sharp relief what signify the failings as compared with the many deeds of kindly living ? That White is qualified in all respects as an authority on the topic is obvious. He has spent the main portion of his long and eventful life as a resident in the town of Emporia, Kansas. There he has entered the spirit of the town completely ; in politics, in social life, in religious matters. Webb Waldron cites an example of White's complete " oneness" with the town as he sings with the Christmas Eve carolers, becoming " part of his town , rejoicing with it."<sup>4</sup> Yet his experiences have by no means been confined to the boundaries of a singlevillage. His viewpoint is broadened through travel, through contact with diplomatic and cultural circles,

3. Carl Van Doran, Contemporary American Novelists p 134  
 4. Webb Waldron , "William Allen White " American Mercury



through high positions of civic trust. Still he returns to the small town as his home.

White's first book "At the Court of Bayville" (1899) depicts against a village background the tendency of youth to follow in the footsteps of its parents. As the parent leads a worthy and meaningful life, so does the child. Parrington puts the theme caustically " --- the glories of pigtails and overalls. The democracy of the vacant lot : rivalry in marbles and handsprings - the leadership of the capable." <sup>5</sup>

What is considered White's best novel, A Certain Rich Man (1906) shows the friendliness and true democracy of the old-time America threatened by the greed of economic centralization. " The novel is a genuinely moving statement of a belief in the rightness of village life and ideals --. The characters are sharply observed and well presented." <sup>6</sup>

In Our Town (1906), a group of thirteen stories made up from happenings observed by White as editor of the Gazette, shows his town as a place " where you know everybody and they know you." He offers pictures of the town millionaire and the town drunk; the smart set and those who pretend to be smart ; the literary club and the would-be cultured group.

The atmosphere of the small village is set by a description of the paper's activities.

5. Parrington op. cit. p 374

6. Blankenship American Literature p. 652

68  
od eninden en liiss jaunis aivis lo anolisaog agla agoroff  
vamor ait na maw liiss erit  
(6091) " sifivoy lo p'ind erit ja " hood jai'l n'stih  
m'noq lo gerchutet erit b'mongond sifiliv a jantze c'isicab  
inciso eni eA , ameneq ait lo aqejator'i erit ni woffel et  
m'ido eni nech eni t'ill l'ap'insen has v'it'ow a aqel  
lo entisig erit ... " vilc'isusq' emolt eni conq recognit'ne  
levin ; dol d'haqq' erit lo goatoomen erit . aq'isivo has afindiq  
erit lo qidatshaf erit - agn'mahaf has zeldam ni vi  
" leidesquo  
dol' n'isatu A , feven jecd n'stih beren'isnoq ei san?  
lo gosporesh erit has esenlibeit erit awo'e (6091) nem  
atmonose lo b'oty eni yd b'ansineit' esiuema ait -biq eni  
jnedasq' u'ivom q'ienisnay a ei leven eni" . noldesf'lat'nes  
,- elach' has erit sifiliv lo esenjig'it erit ni zellied a lo  
" b'ansaq' il'ew has b'ven'ado v'q'rade ens'us'esusq' erit  
obsa pol'rota neer'ift lo q'ont'a , (6091) nwo' n'io ni  
erit lo m'ida na erit yd b'ven'ado sp'mineqqal morti q'  
-y'ere w'om , moy erit' n'asq' a es' nwo' erit awo'e es'asq'  
-lim nwo' erit lo se'ut'oiq' erit' eni " , moy w'om q'ent has q'ad  
obsa erit has tea du'ama erit q'admo nwo' erit has q'admo  
- b'luow erit has du'ao y'asq'it erit ; j'asq' ed od b'indeng  
- q'ont' p'andino ed  
- q'ed nwo' erit sifiliv liiss erit lo eriq'g'osq' erit  
- , asidiviso n'uegas erit lo n'elq'isusq' erit

" ----- It is only a country newspaper and knowing this we refuse to put on city airs. Of course we print the afternoon Associated Press report on the front page , under formal heads and with some pretense of dignity, but the first page is the parlour of the paper, as it is of most of its contemporaries , and in the other pages they and we go around in our shirt sleeves, calling people by their first names; teasing the boys and girls good naturedly ; tickling the pompous members of the village family with straws from time to time , and letting out the family secrets of the community without much regard for the feelings of the supercilious."<sup>7</sup>

White disclaims his town as backward and rural. The same popular airs are being whistled by young men walking home at midnight that " lovelorn young men are whistling in New York, Portland or San Francisco. The girls attend the colleges and universities of both the East and West. The people are just as well dressed as those in the cities. The annual arts and crafts exhibition offers " loot from the four corners of the earth " , the popular magazines are widely subscribed to, the word vase is even pronounced vahze, and in the homes of the town social leaders , " dinner ", rather than " supper", is eaten at night.

The author makes plain the fact that class consciousness rarely present a problem. Although the town has its accepted leaders, especially among the women, and much bickering goes

7. William Allen White, In Our Town p. 6

alid galions bus usquequem vñmico e vñco al 31 ---- "

-reis alid fulig em estuas 10 . eris vñco no ang od esfier em  
famili rahan , egas dñori alid no dñores erer bedisocesca non  
egas jçill alid tuo , vñjigil le esfierem amos . tñm bus abad  
-medicos alid lo dñem lo al ri es , neqas alid lo mofred alid si  
ni dñmora og em bus ynd negaq uscõo alid ni bus , coñpacto  
:zemsa jçill alid vñ sifcoeq gñllito , cevasea tñmico uno  
alid galiondo ; qñbñndan long alid bus svad alid galiondo  
alid mort emmio adi vñlma sifcoeq alid lo esfierem amos  
-moximico alid lo avances vñlma alid vñ galiondo uno . alid oj  
V " , auxiliantequa ent lo sifcoeq alid mit Drayet Nonne frondis vñ  
ent . tamor bus bresyod ca nwoz alid ameliora alid  
emod galiondo nem yñnoz vñ sifcoeq gñlito era eris galiondo emod  
wet ni galiondo era nem yñnoz gñlevoz " jact vñgñbñlo ja  
asgñfico alid bresida alid alid . cosignati nro no bresida alid  
era sifcoeq alid . tñm bus jçill alid dñod lo vñlma vñmico bus  
eris labors alid . selsio alid al seold ca heresbñ lñow em jçill  
estremos mort alid jçill " sifcoeq molidicula alid bus  
beditadnes qñbñlo era senisqas tñlidoz alid . " dñnes alid lo  
amod alid ni bus , endav pescaturoz nava al esav know alid , qd  
"regua " nadz vñdaz , " temaz " , erabasi isloos nwoz alid lo  
. tñgñdo nwoz al  
ceñadacolenco eras jçill nwoz alid nwoz celas iordus alid  
bedisoces alid nadz nwoz vñ sifcoeq . molidom a mlesoq vñlma  
nwoz galiondoz doma bus , nemow alid yñnoz vñlma vñmico , erabasi

on as to who shall receive especial favor from those mighty personages, there is no distinction because of a person's finances . " A boy with twelve dollars a week, who will spend a dollar or two a month to have his clothes pressed, can accomplish any social heights which rise before him, and there is no barrier in our town to a girl merely because she presides at the ribbon counter, which, of course, is as it should be."<sup>8</sup>

The town's people are essentially kind hearted and sincere in their sympathy for others. For although some women in town brought two prizes for their whist parties - one to give if their friend should win the prize , and another to give if the woman they hated should win,<sup>9</sup> even though one woman stooped to make such a distinction, it was a year before poor Mrs. Markley, wife of the wealthy - and miserly -John Markley, discovered her husband was unfaithful to her. Even then she did not discover~~s~~ it through a prattling gossip but through a means of circumstance. The townpeople's kindness and charity have been proved time and time over. " They are always willing to forgive , and be it man or woman who takes a misstep in our town - which is the counterpart of hundreds of American towns - if the offender shows that he wishes to walk straight , a thousand hands are stretched out to help and guide him. It is not true that a man or woman who makes a mistake is eternally damned by his fellows. If one persists in wrong after the first misdeed it is not because

8. Ibid p 43

9. Ibid p 35

gildim aeadr wæt novæt fænqæs syldor i flade oðr of se no  
a'ndreys a' to mæssed nefornisstb on si aeadr , segnoscet  
hneqa illw oðr , fleaw a' caslief erlwea illw vod A " . nefanift  
hæt , bessera' sefisla' sin eard of dñm oðr to milion a  
bre' min stoled esir dñldw nungled fænos 'nas hælfmæsse  
ers ecusset vñrem frig a' of two t'wo si telred on si aeadr  
di se si , sunna' to 'dñldw , regnros modlir eft ja' heflesaq  
B " , se bluora  
-sin has heflesaq hñlil qñliljusseas wæt sliwod erf.  
hæmow emor dybordla' rof , a'ndra' tel qñlqngryg qñlud si' a'nd  
of eric - sefisla' seidw rissed tel cesing awf saguorl twed si  
of adforsa' o're , esley a'nd illw bluora' hæfslit tñnd li' svig  
eric fñgurit hæve , illw bluora' hæfslit ynd hæmow eft li' svig  
ecled hæg a' new di , mættisitib a' hæmow oxum of beqocis hæmow  
ndol- tñfesim lns - ydilsw eft to illw , geftum , a'nd hæmow  
hæd , red of fæltisim a'new hædreda' red berewocel , ydilsw  
sun qñlqng gulfisitib a' dybordla' di pñvocais son oðr era hæd  
seenbñl stefgesqnwoj a' T , nefaniftib le' a'nd a' fñgurit  
era ynd " . nevo emir has hæd befora' need a'nd qñlqng hæ  
hæded ong hæmow to new di ed hæmow , svigul of gulfisw a'vawle  
shorlumg le' fñguritib a'nd si' dñldw - swed tuo si' qñlqng a  
of serfisw ed fænd swordz rehnetlo' a'nd li' - swed nefaniftib le'  
qñlqng of hæ berewocens era abrad fænqæs a' , dñglisla' illw  
sændr oðr hæmow to new a'nd a'nd swed son of li' min ehing hæ  
-deq era li' , swoffel sin yd' þenwæb' qñlqngrelo' si' emasian a  
emased son si' li' hebbim scifl swd resis yndw ni' swela

sheltering love and kindness were not thrown around the wrong-doer. ---- We are all neighbors and friends , and when sorrow comes, no one is alone. The towns greatest tragedies have proven the town's sympathy and have been worth their cost. " <sup>10</sup> What higher tribute than this could White have paid his town !

" The invasion of the small town by industrialism and the disintegration of village virtues " is Vernon L. Parrington's interpretation of In the Heart of a Fool ( 1918 ) .

He calls White " an idealist who opposes the end of Main Street and his destruction by the herd " who concludes with " the excellence of love and the foolishness of selfishness."<sup>11</sup> The book is an expression of White's abounding faith in justice and the essential goodness of man. His pride and affection for Harvey are obvious as he traces its growth from the sunshine and grass of the prairie to a " thousand flued Hill." The book explains the America that rose when her great day came - , exultant , triumphant to the glorious call to an ideal, arose from sodid things environing her body and soul, and consecrated herself without stint or faltering hand to the challenge of democracy."<sup>12</sup>

In the Heart of a Fool traces the heart breaking growth of the town of Harvey from a friendly democratic kindly community to a large town of greed and avarice. Harvey , at first , was typical of many New England towns although its setting was in the West. Its pioneers were of " good solid

10. Ibid p 19

11. Parrington op cit. p 374

12. White In the Heart of a Fool p.5



stock" from the east and had the typical New Englander's desire for the conventional institutions of civilized life; the schoolhouse, the newspaper, orderly government, and churches.<sup>13</sup> This soon was a "busy and noisy and restless world," however for first the cattle trade caused trade to flourish and then the discovery of coal and oil and gas brought in a new tide of material avarice, washing out the old ways of human kindness. Money became the great god Budd and everyone thought the "quick easy and exorbitant profits really made the equality of opportunity that everyone desired. They thought in terms of democracy which is at bottom a spiritual estate, - and they acted like gross materialists."<sup>14</sup> The "prairie grass disappeared," and the blue sky over Harvey was threatened and people were saying with Tom Van Dorn, "The world is mine--- in this life I shall take what I find that I can get. I'm not going to be meek, nor humble, nor patient, nor forgiving and forbearing ---."

"I intend to command, not obey ! Rule, not serve ! I shall take and not give - not give save as it pleases me to have my hand licked now and then."<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile the profiteers were raking in money from their mines ; money which should have been given the underpaid workers, that their children might be clean and not hungry. Those people were considered worthless, and not intelligent enough to desire the comforts of life, meaning , naturally, proper food, shelter and clothing. Rather, the money was used

13. Ibid p. 63

14. Ibid p. 69

15. Ibid p. 19

88  
a' tehnologii well Ispliggi erd bed lma jene erd mori "knock  
till oscillivis to enoljnditni latonevnoe erd rot erleab  
lma ,insarivavog elmerio ,tagaqawen erd ,serorilioris erd  
shaltar lma valon lma yam " a kaw noce erd <sup>31</sup> .asirwado  
er geng because erbar offisa erd daril tot nevewoif "elmon  
tag lma llo lma lsoo to yievocob erd neit lma delmoff  
bio erd duo unisaw cocire latrider lo shir wen a ni digond  
lma beng tag taseu erd emaced yarom .certainly nerud lo ykaw  
adliqg Inadiidoxe lma yasa xolup " erd indiadic enoyreva  
betiseb enoyreva daft ydlniitocco lo ydlniamp erd afiam ydlni  
-iga a notice de et hold yarhomen to emied al dngordi yad  
Al rasilidoxes smoy erd bedas yait lma - .esajas laudia  
yaving rovo yu erd erd his " .berasqetli esay elinim " erd  
erd " .muu not dsiy yarha erd erd lma Raneqetli saw  
T'saii tuit I daim erd llaide I erd erd hi ---anim el blfow  
,meitay non ,erformi yon ,pleem erd erd pniog Jon m'I .dey nco  
--- parnasediel lma galiviget von  
I ; avrea Jon celini i yedo Jon ,basman erd hnejni I "  
erd em tceasli i i em avra evig Jon - evig Jon lma erd llaide  
di " .herd lma won llaide lma yu erd  
lleds mori yenko ni ynlidat erew eredilidox erd elidwassli  
blidoxing erd neriu need erew blidox doliv genot ; cemlii  
,yugam Jon lma haflo er dgeim nemibido rifei daft ,eredilidox  
ineffident Jon lma ,asellidox heredianos erew erd qeqog erd  
yilamian ,palmasem ,erlif lo erdilidox erd erd erd  
best saw yenko erd yekpok .yekpok lma rifei ,boot yekpok

to refurnish, and then re-re-furnish the enormous - and hideous - mansions on the hill. The " Haves " were in power and the " Have-Nots " were not worth consideration.

Although lewdness and obscenity were prevalent in the valley of workmen, ( for they knew no better ) the state of marriage was held in respect on the hill: the " development of a two phase soul with but one will. Politics in Harvey was a matter of helping one's friends. Everywhere was self interest. Only a few exceptions could be found ; as the young girl in love with the town's chief pride and joy, ( and sex-addict, to boot ! ) who asked, " Isn't love the miracle that brings the soul out into the world through the senses ? " ; and as the young fanatic, Grant Adams, who pledged himself to service for mistreated mine workers of Harvey even to the repudiation of his own son ; and as the minister who thanking God at New Year's that the " mission church at South Harvey is on a paying basis , and the pipe organ in the home church paid for - that's some comfort ! " It was such people as these, kindly, believing people who felt the " work of the men who toil with their hands is just as valuable to society as preaching and trading and buying and selling and banking and editing and lawing and doctoring, and insuring and school-teaching, " <sup>16</sup> that were depended upon to rebuild the town of Harvey away from its " crass riot of greed and toward a place abounding in equality of opportunity, a place where money would rank second after brotherliness , where Laura Nesbit's

bns - suomous eitj deimur-i-er-er mord bns ,deimurier et  
 newog ni eaw " avah " eitj .iliid eitj no emolism - emoshim  
 ,molvesshimo rflow don eaw " ajoii- avah " eitj bns  
 eitj etz zneleveng eaw ystnecado bns znenkwi agnodaia  
 le edzda eitj ( dedjed on wenn yodd not ) ,zneleveng le yoffav  
 le jneqoievez " eitj :iliid eitj no doeqer ni bled eaw epefiam  
 eaw yawnat ni acilif .iliid uno jnd diliw lros unsaq owd n  
 -eindt lfas eaw emdwyneka ,zneleveng c'eno gatqef le rafet e  
 lros gawoy eitj za ; hauot ed bns emolqoxe wei a ( ino .issi  
 - xee bns ) ,rol bns zbilq lairu z'newt eitj lros evoi ni  
 jacs elozat eitj evoi d'nsi " ,bnsas orw ( ! good or ,zilbba  
 ; " i zennes eitj agnoudt lflow ed foini tuo lros eitj agnoudt  
 zilemlif bogbelq orw ,unaba jnsarB zilbba z'now eitj ce bns  
 sitj ed nave yarvali le zneleveng enim bedenqelam rof zolivre a of  
 gatqefat orw zefchinim eitj za bns ; nos nwo sim le ncifashuqei  
 zeviai jnqjz sa horodo noissim " eitj jans c'insy well qabot  
 nofudo emod eitj il mago eqiq eitj lros , zleas grizas e no et  
 zeed eitj ziqeqz rlos eaw jI " i jachimc emos z'nsi - rol bisq  
 orw nem eitj le zlow " eitj jiet orw ziqeqz grivelled ,zibule  
 za zjelooz of eldarizv en jant ei abnsd'vlerd diliw lros  
 bns gatqef bns gatqef bns gatqef bns gatqef  
 - leofes bns gatqef bns gatqef bns gatqef bns gatqef  
 le hvoj eitj blidder etz noqz behaqeb ere w'zard 'f " ,zilbba  
 zedq a brawo bns bessig le jofk zato " azi mort yaws yewin  
 yewin etekz zedq a ,yilbba zedq le zilbba ni gatqefoda  
 z'fidaek emos etekz , zzenkwiemtud zedq bnsas z'nsi blos

words would ring true" --- it isn't the good the money does those who receive, its the good it does the giver. And the good it does the giver is measured by the amount of sacrifice - the degree of himself that he puts into it." <sup>17</sup>

Such is William Allen White's belief in the eternal "goodness" of the small town, the only lasting champion of democracy and equality. So firm is his belief in human kind that even now he sees man as essentially democratic. After re-reading an editorial he wrote nearly forty years previously he says he is convinced that man is essentially static. He is what he was and what he will be. Barring sickness which changes his physical set-up, he is the same man in his declining years that he was in his youth. He learns more, he defines the things more accurately, ~~is~~ a little keener in his perceptions. But his attack on life, the things called his aims and purposes, remains, through the changing years, unchanged ----. I used to think the best people of a community were what I have defined them here, 'good, honest, upright, law-abiding people.' I know now that there is no group of best people--- the persons I would define as best people change. It is never the same group, certainly not the temple pharisees and their acolytes, and never the ragtail and bobtail. But out of the scribes and pharisees and out of the scum and in between these two, different crystallizations of public opinion come at different times and so democracy was saved when we abolished caste lines. And the only threat

17. ibid p. 195

soob yemom odd booy odd j'mat di --- " soob yift bluw abrow  
odd DNA . neviv odd soob it booy odd odd , evolusion odd seond  
-phase to Jumone odd vd hermanem al neviv odd soob ji booy

" . di odd usq od Jardilisim to seyeb odd - coll  
fornicis odd od "telled niefin" dellu malitie si nowe  
to antiquido pribital vido odd , rwoj fimek ent lo "seenboog"  
hulu pismal od telled odd si rwoj ps . ydilisupc oda yoniboom  
-refta . olisommen difitissase to now heet od won hore jard  
-neviv exey vido yfasek simek od laitodile si ylleser-en  
, sida difitissase si man yado munitance si en even od yfase  
doliv esenlote ynlid . od liliu en Jardilisim now od jard si ell  
-ell od nam emas odd el od , qu -des Isolynq . bdi segnaro  
en , seom arseli ell . kroyo siu od now od jard exey painilish  
siu od yenesk offitl e al . ydilisupc agom sagidi odd senlisi  
siu hulfo agnidi odd . offitl no simeks alii one . ydilisupc  
-exey ydilisupc odd ydilisupc , enleter , zazogule lns emis  
-Jumone a lo elogesq feed siu hulfo od been I . --- beginjoru  
-creasod booy ! , ered medit benitah even I inde even vd  
-an si erent jadd won won I . elogesq ydilisupc-wai , ydilisupc  
feed as enleter bluw I elogesq odd ---elogesq jued to quay  
odd don ydilisupc , quay emas odd never el di . ydilisupc elogesq  
-flapper odd never lns . seyebos viad lns cocinando elogesq  
-lo lns lns . seyebos lns esdior erd lo lns lns . flapper lns  
-analisisupc jadetilis , lns erent assayed al lns muis siu  
-yelisupc od hui assaid ynenetilis ja won mulinig otidor lo  
-dunes vido odd lns . esdior exey benitilisek od neviv hovar em

to democracy that I see now, after forty years, is a hereditary economic class which shall assume the powers of a ruling caste." 18

Order of Books

1. Gentleman from Indiana (1897)
2. The Turnstile (1915)
3. Magnificent Ambersons (1918)
4. Alice Adams (1921)
5. The Midlander (1924)

18. William Allen White Forty Years on Main Street

-Informed a of country where we live, when was I sent to a company of  
a to review and examine Lloyd's rolls, said it was  
of "green" entries

greenish tint no green Yester 1916 in the middle of the year 1916 the green  
erecting a new

A "James Whitcomb Riley with a college education, writing fiction instead of verse," Booth Tarkington is another stand defender of village friendliness. Born and educated ( except for his few years at Princeton ) in Indiana, he has observed and participated in the life of mid-western towns. He had been exposed to **BOOTH TARKINGTON** his college years - as he himself puts it, "I have no doubt that I imbibed some education there (Princeton). Though it seems to me that I tried to avoid that as much as possible."<sup>1</sup> His life had been rather independent with time for foreign travel and summers in Maine as well as his many literary works.

#### Order of Books

The themes found in Tarkington's books usually concern the problems and ambitions of young people in the social and economic life of small towns. According to Van Doren, Tarkington is the mold of Indiana.<sup>2</sup> He has been critics an automaton grinding out novels with happy endings to please American housewives. But he refuses to believe that art requires gloom. Those whose books invariably end in tragedy are mere "entertainment writers" and worthy of being classified only among the "lowest forms of writers."<sup>3</sup>

Despite various criticisms of his plots, Booth Tarkington has done much toward lifting the despicably gloomy veil from the fiction of the middle west. His geniality and shrewd

1. Dickinson, A. D. Booth Tarkington, p. 2.
2. Van Doren, Carl. Contemporary American Novelists, p. 61.
3. Roberts, Kenneth. "The Transition from Main and Indiana." Pub. Evening Post, N. Y. 1924 April 4-15.

И С Т О Ч Н И К А Т Н Т О О С

add to Report

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1. Dickinson, Asa Don Booth Tarkington, p.2

2. Van Doran, Carl Contemporary American Novelists, p.84

3. Roberts, Kenneth "The Gentleman from Maine and Indiana "  
Sat. Evening Post v. 204:pp14-15.



view of life are evident throughout his novels. His village backgrounds are true to real life ; his characters are alive and compelling. Easily one of the leading American novelists of his generation, Tarkington has reached a vast reading public in his championship of the village as a place - not of bigotry, but of understanding kindness.

The Gentleman from Indiana ( 1899) is a revelation of small town goodness. It tells of the rise to power of the college-bred journalist John Harkless, defender of independence and purifier of political campaigns. His love for all the village of Platville means leads him courageously through many a risky adventure so endearing him to his fellow-townsmen that they take turns "looking after him ,," and protecting him from the ruthless Cross Roads gang. Harkless himself was typical of the villagers in his willingness to help others in time of need - as he had helped Old Mr. Fisher " find himself" again; in his eagerness to protect the people from rotten politics in the form of Mr. McCune.

The ending of the novel is typical of the spirit pervading throughout. Watching the villagers rejoicing over Harkless' nomination to Congress, Helen Sheridan says,

" Look. Aren't the good, dear people ?"

"The beautiful people, I answered." <sup>4</sup>

So we find in Booth Tarkington a contributor to the general contentment at the interpretation of the American vil-

egnilliv aH . elevon aif dnoðjuordið dreifive s'm erif ic weiv  
 erif eris vritjuminni mið ; erif leir af enri eru aborgarandi  
 eriflevon næstremma gríðarliði erit ic með ylissæ gyllfieqqan ðna  
 ðing umhverf erit a herðar erit nörgilistur , hildarinnar erit te  
 te ðor - svolg er ss egnilliv erit te qidenskjumnið mi aif  
 esentifinn gríðarstefnum te með yllofis  
 te hildarlevon a mi (9001 ) snældi mott? nemajinn erit  
 erif te rævog er aif erit te aifed ði næringið með liðum  
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 erit illi vor evol aH , englequða fæstidog te ræfingið hra  
 yðum dýgordið týfumunnið mið ahsaf ensem allivdafi te egnilliv  
 nesemod-waldir mið od mið gríðarstefnum os ennumevna vjalt a  
 mið gríðarliði ðna " , mið veitla gríðarlið " ennot erast yfir fadd  
 key ? læmmid easfingar . Hins vegar absosílvan , en mott  
 ni stendr qfen ar ængilliliw erit ni sheysilliv erit te fæsbygg  
 "fleymid laft " reðslif . Þe hlio heglen bad mi ss - þann te suðt  
 fæstion mott sifgosa enj fæstion of meðregas mið ni ; misys  
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 enhverjan síðla erit te fæsbygg si fævon erit te gríðar erit  
 'esentifinn hevur gríðarlið enyilliv erit gríðarlið , dnoðjuordið  
 erit næstremma hildar , fæstion of hildarinnar  
 "y sifgosa með þeim , hevur s'm ðinað a mott " .  
 b) " hildarinnar I fæsbygg intilfædd erit "  
 erit of ræfinginum a nörgilistur Hinsv li laft er ek  
 -illiv meðrum erit te hildarinnar erit ja dnefndum fæstionar

5

lage as happy and innocent community! He decries the ruthless ways of finance as too hurried to " stop and shake hands with a friend on the street", too busy to notice the homely things of life and too eager for " smoke " to realize that Wealth and Bigness after all are present only as one minor phase of complete living.

Bibbs Sheridan, central figure of The Turmoil(1915) is characteristic of the dreamy quality to be found in the village at the turn of the century. Even though his dreaminess led others - even his family - to think him " not quite right", he alone had a true sense of values. His father worshipped "Bigness" and would sacrifice all to it, even himself. He earnestly believed " that there is no end but Bigness ever and for ever. " <sup>6</sup>

But Bibbs, after being forced to give up his peaceful and contemplative mode of living for the role of " a hawtler", still asked of Bigness its purpose. Each generation in turn toiled and sweated and slaved that their posterity might live in peace and wisdom enjoying the fruits of the earth.<sup>7</sup> And in the end ,posterity enjoyed no such pleasures but only further turmoil. To Bibbs the whole thing seemed a useless sacrifice. In trying to make his father understand his thoughts, he said of Wealth ( the precursor of Bigness ),

" What is the use of this city being rich and powerful? They don't teach the children any more in the school because

5. Boynton, Percy H. Literature and American Life, p.504

6. The Turmoil, p.5

7. Ibid , p.345

8

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"telzqab a" lo elor edj zot grivilz lo abom svildzignuz bns  
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some people - not rich and powerful people - have thought the thoughts to teach the children. And yet when you've been reading the paper I've heard you objecting to the children being taught anything except what helps them make money. You said it was wasting the taxes. You want them taught to make a living, but not to live. When I was a little boy this wasn't an ugly town ; now its hideous. What's the use of being big just to be hideous ? I mean I don't think all this has meant really going ahead- its just been getting bigger and dirtier and noisier. Wasn't the whole country happier and in many ways wiser when it was smaller and cleaner and quieter and kinder ? " <sup>8</sup>

The Magnificent Ambersons (1918) again shows the development and growth of a small town. The opening description of the book sets the time of the story as " the days of front halls, side halls, back halls, of parlours, of sitting rooms and libraries and trolleys drawn by mules. " These last were " genially accomodating for a lady could whistle to one from an upstairs window and the car would halt at once and wait for her while she shut the window, put on her hat and cloak, went downstairs, found an umbrella, told ' the girl' what to have for dinner and came forth from the house." <sup>9</sup>

The friendly and understanding spirit of the village life at the turn of the century may be seen in Isabel Minafer's comment on the curiosities of " funny, fat, old Mrs. Johnson"

8. The Turmoil , p.360

9. The Magnificent Ambersons , p.6

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who sat at her window with opera glasses focused on the street and sometimes forgot to put the light out in the room behind her ! Yet Isabel philosophically says, " She's a good friendly old thing , a little too intimate in her manner,sometimes, and if her poor old opera glasses afford her the quiet happiness of knowing what sort of a young man our new cook is walking out with I'm the last to begrudge it to her. " <sup>10</sup>

The Ambersons and their mansion made up - in a purely democratic way - the magnificent element in contrast with the homely ways of the less wealthy. They were leaders in society, in the cultural advancement of the village, in business. But the new " hustling " ways surpassed the Ambersons. Their magnificence was overshadowed by the shadow of the " New Americans" optimistic believers in hustling and honesty because both paid ; who were idealists striving that their city might become a " better , better , and better city," meaning by "better" more prosperous " . Their slogan became " The more prosperous my beloved city, the more prosperous beloved I ! So Tarkington mourned the passing of the old era - the time of friendly democracy , of love for homespun things - in favor of smoke-screened, hustling, factory filled cities.

Alice Adams ( 1921) offers the pathetic story of the "heroine's " desperate intricacies to capture a husband. The small town is used as the stage for Alice's struggles to raise herself in the social life of the elite, despite her "democra-

10. ibid , pp.6-11



tic " background. When she finally accepts the fact that "select balls" and "little dinners" are not for her, she turns to her newly planned middle-class life; happy in the thought that, although the transition would be difficult and filled with frequent gloom, the result would be " gay with <sup>11</sup> sunshine."

The Midlander (1924) is the Middle-West story of Dan Oliphant, a character typical of the city he has helped to develop. The changes taking place in Midland during the turn of the century are similar to those occurring in other towns all over the United States at that time. Dan Oliphant is a "Babbitt", a city-booster who visualizes his Oranby Addition as the hope of future generations - even to the exclusion of family interests and friends. The atmosphere of the town is realistically and convincingly portrayed and shows the influence early in young Dan's career. He "disported himself about the neighborhood - or about other neighborhoods, for that matter - in whatever society offered him any prospect of gayety. He played marbles 'for keeps' with ragtag and bobtail on every vacant lot in town, he never washed his hands or face, or brushed his hair except upon repeated command, yet loved water well enough to 'run off swimming' and dive through a film of ice upon an early Saturday in March." Among his many accomplishments were "swearing with intricacy", smoking almost anything not fireproof, inhaling,



and gambling with instruments " implements more sophisticated than marbles ,," and above all, keeping these accomplishments from the knowledge of his parents. " <sup>12</sup>

But even with such a varied childhood Dan still found time to defend his friends and protect them from cruel insults. When Harlan would have " put Sam Kohn off the place " because he was a Jew and therefore - to Harlan's mind - an undesirable, Dan stood up for his chum and would have fought his brother rather than have Sam's feelings hurt. Yet he did so not with a superior feeling that Sam needed protection since he was Jewish , but because Harlan had no right to insult his friend whether a Jew or not. " <sup>13</sup>

Dan's childhood in Midland had a lasting effect upon his life for he came to connect the town with thoughts of home. Upon his return from a visit to New York he confided to Martha Shelby , " The minute I got off the train I had the feeling that this is where I honestly belong. It was home and the people and the streets and the yard, even the air - they all feel homelike to me. " <sup>14</sup>

Mid land also seemed to Dan a place where he could " let his breath out " and talk in natural tones without getting scared of the consequences . And the people themselves took a live interest in one another. Even when meeting on the street they'd stop and shake hands and ask about each others' families , and they're mighty nice intelligent lookin' people,

12. The Midlander , p.4

13. Ibid , chapter 2.

14. Ibid , p.52



too. In New York, everybody hurries by ; they don't know each other anyway , of course, " <sup>15</sup> explained Dan.

Throughout the novel, Tarkington portrays the mid-western town as a place of " dignified spaciousness " as compared with New York City " with the squeezed brownstone fronts and apartments " <sup>16</sup> where living is hurried and purposeless.

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

Order of Books

1. Millboro People (1915)
2. Rough Hawk (1920)
3. Brimming Cup ( 1922)
4. Deepening Stream ( 1930 )

15. The Midlander , p.51

16. The Midlander , p.2



The defense of the village is not the chief aim of Dorothy Canfield Fisher, but her writings have done much to help countering the vicious pictures of the atmosphere. Mrs. Fisher has the happy faculty of recognizing the bad along with the good, and assigning to each its proper place. The necessity of the small town's evolution, the commonness as often branching on the villages, are described and analyzed by the descendants of village life, accepting those characteristics. Mrs. Fisher adds the friendliness, the community fellowship, the sense of values of right and wrong, thus offering a composite picture of village relationships as it is lived - not only in Order of Books, but in its counterpart all over the U.S. 1. Hillsboro People (1915)

2. Rough Hewn (1920)
3. Brimming Cup (1922)
4. Deepening Stream (1930)

Miss Canfield, now Mrs. Fisher, was born in Kansas, daughter of a universal traveler in Europe and America; her sympathies and encouraging friendships with people of many nations. She received her bachelor's degree from Ohio State University and her doctorate degree from Columbia. After her marriage she came to live on the side of a mountain near a little village in Vermont " (Arlington). Here she learned thoroughly and participated in the spirit of New England life. Mrs. Fisher's deep-rooted understanding of small town life has enabled her to present it realistically, to defend " the old fundamentals of home life and living,



The defense of the village is not the chief aim of Dorothy Canfield Fisher, but her writings have done much toward counteracting the vicious tirades of the attackers. Mrs. Fisher has the happy faculty of recognizing the bad along with the good, and assigning to each its proper place. The scarcity of cultured beauty, the prejudices, the common - ness so often bordering on the vulgar, are decried and condemned by the insurgents of village life. Accepting these characteristics, Mrs. Fisher adds the friendliness, the community fellowship, the sense of values of right and wrong, thus offering a composite picture of village relationships as it is lived - not only in her town in Vermont - but in its counterpart all over the United States.

Miss Canfield, now Mrs. Fisher, was born in Lawrence, Kansas, daughter of a university professor. She was educated in Europe and America ; her wide travel broadening her sympathies and encouraging friendships with people of many nations. She received her bachelor's degree from Ohio State University and her doctorate degree from Columbia. After her marriage she came "to live on the side of a mountain near a little village in Vermont " ( Arlington ). Here she learned thoroughly and participated in the spirit of New England lives. Mrs. Fisher's deep-rooted understanding of small town life has enabled her to present it realistically , to defend " the old fundamentals of home life and training,

1. F.B. Pattie, "The New American Literature 1910-1920," p. 200  
2. Bertha E. May, "Dorothy Canfield, the Little Vermonter"



the wholesome and the uplifting." Pattee says, "She has been a wholesome influence upon her period, a period sadly needing such guidance as hers."<sup>1</sup>

As Mrs. Fisher has affected her readers, so she has affected those living in her sphere. Dorothea Lawrence Man relates this conversation :

"Variety is what life needs to be well rounded," Dorothy Canfield once told me. You should know country life as well as city life. You should mingle intimately with people of other countries than your own - living among them, not merely traveling through their cities. As an American, it would be well to have at least one part of your education in an entirely different section of the country from that in which you live."<sup>2</sup>

Just such a liberal minded philosophy of education pervades Mrs. Fisher's novels. Her central theses : education, family relationships and social customs, are developed in the atmosphere of quiet villages where contentment - not stagnant - but progressive - may be found. She says in an article :

"Those in cities, living with feverish haste in the present only, cannot understand the comforting sense we have of belonging also to the past and future. Our own youth is not dead to us, as yours is, from lack of anything to recall it. The people we love do not slip quietly into that bitter oblivion to which the dead are consigned by those too hurried

1. F.L. Pattee, The New American Literature 1890-1930, p.266  
 2. Dorothea L. Man, "Dorothy Canfield, the Little Vermonter"



to remember. All their quaint and dear absurdities which make up personality are embalmed in the leisurely talk of the village, still enriched by all they brought to it." <sup>3</sup>

Thus we see Mrs. Fisher setting forth the " belief that community fellowship - a gathering to watch a century plant bloom - breeds an artistic spirit finer than the old world art and culture can offer." <sup>4</sup>

The meaning of this is clearly seen in The Hillsboro People ( 1915 ) a series of pictures of life in a small, quiet Vermont village where contentment with life is lord and master. The summer folk wonder at the uneventful lives of the natives. " For mercy's sake, what do you people do , all the time, away off here, so far from everything. " Then Simple Martin, the town fool, responds philosophically, " Do ? Why, we jes' live ! " Mrs. Fisher continues ; " And sometimes it seems to us that we are the only people in America engaged in that most wonderful occupation. We know, of course, that we must be wrong in thinking thus, and that there must be countless other Hillsboros scattered everywhere, rejoicing as we do in an existance which does not necessarily make us care-free or happy, which does not in the least absolve us from working hard ( for Hillsboro is unbelievably poor in money ), but which does keep us alive in every fiber of our sympathy and thrilling with the consciousness of the life of others. " <sup>5</sup>

3. Reader's Digest v. 36 pp.22-8.

4. Parrington, V.L. Main Currents in American Thought, III, p.376

5. Hillsboro People " At the Foot of Hemlock Mt." p.5



The fullness of life to be had in the small town is appreciated through the agonizing efforts of Old Miss Abigail to draw the populace back to their native Greenford from the blooming mill-city of Johnsonville. She continued Church services even though only two faithful souls made up the congregation ; she kept the library open even though no one read the books ; she insisted on keeping school for six reluctant children. And in the end her loyalty won out. She willingly sacrificed her last bit of mountain " land " with its rushing streams and latent electrical power that the development of a mill might induce the lagging villagers back to their waiting homes ; that the roads need no longer be grown to grass for want of " men and women and little children to come over to and from their homes. " <sup>6</sup>, that Christmas parties may be attened joyously (not for bribes of hot meals ) and result in happiness ( not children crying from " mortal lonesomeness").

In Rough Hewn (1920) ,Mrs. Fisher pictures the inevitable attraction of the small town for those who have known its "folskey"ways; its "longline of splendid splendid elms";its "long New England farm-houses" where you could see the head of the lady of the house from one window and see the head of a cow from another "which arrangement of living is just as clean as any other for" you have so much woodshed and hay-horn and things between you." <sup>7</sup> Although Neal and Marise, in

6. Hillsboro People " Adeste Fideles " p.336

7. Rough Hewn, p.406



their love for art and travel, met in Paris, they plan to live in their remembered Asheley, Vermont for contentment and abundant living.

The Brimming Cup ( 1920 ) , continuing the story of Marise and Neale from their wedding day on, offers the story of the right type of atmosphere for the bringing-up of children, and shows the great advantage to be had in the small town in the right fashioning of children's lives. Van Doran says "Rarely have a mother's relations with her children been so sweetly represented; rarely have the manners of a New England township been more glowingly portrayed. The setting glows among its green hills and valleys, its snows and flowers. There are minor characters that stand up vividly in the memory, like persons known face to face. The atmosphere is at once tense with desire and gracious with understanding. Though the materials come from an old tradition they have been treated with the fires of a scrutinizing mind which burn beneath the novelists." <sup>8</sup> The power of village upbringing and influence is seen in Marise herself as she masters the temptation to refute the reality of her contentment and seek joy in a thrilling passion. The settled companionship of her husband and the heavy burden of children, she realizes, are of more worth than any of the rapture and luxury she would gain in exchange.

In The Deepening Stream ( 1930 ) the town of Rustdorf is exemplified as the center of sympathetic kindness and friendship, influencing the lives of its inhabitant. The story of

8. Van Doran, Carl Contemporary American Novelists, p.175



Matey Gilbert begins when she is four years old and takes her through the early years of her married life. Her father, a professor of French, has built for his family an apparently "cultured" home, but seen through Matey's honest eyes it is only superficially so. Beneath the polished appearance of her parents are overwhelming arrogance and stillborn individuality. This same honestess enables Matey to recognize in Rustdorf the true meaning of right learning, and the secret of beauty and permanence in her marriage.

A village such as Rustdorf has a "powerful pull" even for a visitor. As Matey says; "I don't feel like a newcomer. Less than ever in my life. It sounds foolish, literary, made up- but almost from the first, I've felt as though I'd come back to a --- place I'd always known, to people near to me."<sup>9</sup>

What was the great attraction that drew people? Certainly it was not the social activities; "a visit to Poughkeepsie for a concert, or a free lecture at Vassar," or the "Rustdorf Chorus" which gave a public performance every spring, or the activities of the "Bridge Club", or the "Village Improvement Society."<sup>10</sup> Certainly none of these "doings" would make the village of Rustdorf so important to its visitors. Now would the village appeal to those who aspired to upper brackets in society for "Everybody was related to everybody else by blood, or marriage, or old neighborhood habits; everybody knew the resources, financial and intellectual, of all the rest."

9. The Deepening Stream, p.110

10. ibid, p.157



It would have been impossible for anyone to pretend to be  
 other than he was so nobody bothered to try." <sup>11</sup>

Neither would the appeal of Rustdorf be due to the exciting and dramatic lives of those living there for all had the same prosaic attitude as Adrien - " Better be a good savings-bank cashier than a medium artist." <sup>12</sup>

The attraction was none of these things. Matey herself experienced it after she and her family had completed their war work in France and were about to return home. " Her longing for home wasn't personal. Her nostalgia was like that of a lost or bewildered dog or horse, sick for a familiar smell or sound - like that of a refugee for the one spot where her pulse would beat in unison with that of the earth and sky. It was for the feel under her hand of the familiar door catches, for the irregularity under her feet of the well known warped floor boards, for the faint smell of creosote in the attic which she had always tried to prevent, for the broad gleam of the Hudson from the windows of the children's room, for the myriad-leaved vitality of the beach-tree; for the blades of grass growing within her own yard different from any other grass." <sup>13</sup>

Thus the appeal of Rustdorf, although indescribable in so many words, makes itself known through the minute and homely details of everyday living. The importance of " abundant life" pervades all of Mrs. Fisher's novels. Optimistically advancing the " old fundamentals of home life and training,

11. ibid, p.158

12. ibid, p.119

13. ibid, p.338

18

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if "not ed barding you can do now or next ten  
years add or add to barding to focus on and below tradition  
but this not strict until need to avoid other bns until  
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listed below against need to avoid any categories with  
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with strict rules, easier to get bards involved to add a lo  
soya eno ed not regular to add self - focus to focus  
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onto to focus strict but not revised itself because would allow  
not stricting of bardic criteria had this strict since add at other  
add to bards and most needs add to myself bards add  
added add to stricting bards and not more strict  
SI "adding focus the most important  
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the wholesome and the uplifting,"<sup>14</sup> the keynote of each novel has been the genuine qualities to be found in small towns and villages. Her villages are not grotesquely distorted - as some critics say - as the ideal, for she offers a complete picture, neither completely bad, nor completely good. Seen in such a light, the "touch of things earthly" endears itself to ordinary humans so susceptible to failings - and offers a place of refuge, of growth and real living.

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dose to stronger eff. <sup>PI</sup> "Galiflque est has amœbiæ et  
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-ell quepasior, Jon era negalliv red segalliv has lewod  
stetio site rot, Isobli est na -yan solitio amos an - heroy  
yfedéfqmc han, has yfetelqmc redfien, emteliq sialmos a  
"virtus agnitis lo deyoy" est, fngil a nava ni des, book  
of effigiescece ce amsum yfanibis of ffeadi sinelius  
has diworg lo ,fufier lo esqf a scatlo has - signifist  
gavill Ised

K.K. Stoll once said, " Literature is, of course, not life, neither history nor material for history. But a scroll where are traced and chartered the uncharred thoughts of writers and reader, a life within life, fancy contrasted at odds with life."

#### PART IV

Professor Stoll's statement that literature does not represent real life may be understood after the foregoing discussion. **A GLANCE INTO THE FUTURE** the author sees it. The reader is soon interpretive the word of the author. How far from real life must be the result! Sinclair Lewis described a village as despicable and ugly as Gopher Prairie. Sherwood Anderson's Kinsburg, Ohio is a place demanding psychopathic attention. On the other extreme Booth Tarkington and William Allen White insist that all villagers are good, dear folk worthy of God's blessings. Mrs. Dorothy Canfield Fisher would seem most representative of the village in its actuality. In her obvious inclination to avoid either defense or attack of the village she has become its most promising support. She admits its failings - its tendency toward gossip, its veering away from industrialization which so many consider progression; she admits the lack of cultural and social opportunities to be found in large cities. Admitting all this, she has still shown that happiness may be found in small town life, that fullness in living does not necessarily depend on "citized" conveniences. Mrs. Fisher has experienced the "happiness which

1. "Literature No ' Convenient '" Modern Language Review v. 19, 141 (April, 1924).

VI ТРАТ

ЗАЩИТА ИМУЩЕСТВА

E.E. Stoll once said, " Literature is, of course, not life, neither history nor material for history, but a scroll where are traced and characterized the unfettered thoughts of writers and reader, a life within life, fancy somewhat at odds with life. "<sup>1</sup>

Professor Stoll's statement that literature does not represent real life may be understood after the foregoing discussion. Life in a village is interpreted as the author sees it. The reader in turn interprets the work of the author. How far from real life must be the result ! Sinclair Lewis described a village as detestable and ugly as Gopher Prairie, Sherwood Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio is a place demanding sympathetic attention. On the other extreme Booth Tarkington and William Allen White insist that all villagers are good, dear folk worthy of God's blessings. Mrs. Dorothy Canfield Fisher would seem most representative of the village in its actuality. In her obvious inclination to avoid either defense or attack of the village she has become its most promising support. She admits its failings - its tendency toward gossip, its veering away from industrialization which so many consider progression; she admits the lack of cultural and social opportunities to be found in large cities. Admitting all this, she has still shown that happiness may be found in small town life, that fullness in living does not necessarily depend on " citified " conveniences. Mrs. Fisher has experienced the " happiness which

1. " Literature No ' Document '" Modern Language Review  
v. 19,141 ( April,1924),



comes from within " in her small Vermont town.

Of course, the town or village is not for everyone. This would be a sad world if we all had the same tastes. Many have, however, learned to love the small town for its friendly ways, its helpfulness, its neighborliness, and above all its dependability - the knowledge that there , friends once made will remain so through trying difficulties.

What will be the reputation of the village in the future ? That is difficult to say, but modern novels are largely tending away from the too sweet romanticism of White and Tarkington ; from the cruel and " debunking " realism of Anderson and Lewis. Novels today have assumed a gracious reality - one of sympathy and understanding. The " tough minded " period is fast disappearing. The new realism of today in its very nature will retain the friendly democracy of the village, neither the beautiful village of Emporia, Kansas nor the hideous village of Gopher Prairie, Minnesota but one just halfway between as are all good things in this life.

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lma' ,zzeniloddyler' edd' ,zzeniloddyler' edd' ,zawl' zilnethul'  
,zawl' zed' zghelwom' edd' - zwillahqeqeb' edd' lli' lli' zewes'  
,zaldinellis' jazys' dgeqas' ca' niemur' lliw' zham' sono' zilnethul'  
edd' at egnilly edd' to nolzimget' edd' ed' lliw' jazw  
ca' zlevon' zashom' jad' ,zaw' of zilnethul' ed' jadT' + zewes'  
zidw' to malzimman' zewes' edd' not' zewes' zilnethul'  
malzes' " zilnethul' " lma' lewic' edd' mort' ; nozgħiex' lma'  
zueċa' għadha zewex' zebek' zilex' lli' a norċiex' " to  
zgħo' " edd' ,zilnethul' lma' zilnethul' to zgo' - zilnethul'  
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żonnox' zilnethul' edd' nisżej' lliw' emher' zgo' edd' hi' qabel  
zisproġi to egnilly iż-żiżżeek edd' xejjen ,zegħiġi edd' to  
żażżeen ,zixxas' zedqo' to egnilly emhekk' edd' non zsexa' l  
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## A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this thesis has been an objective analysis of the controversial writings on the American village. For such an analysis, books by representatives of both the attack and the defense have been discussed as an indication of the future position of the village may be held; whether it is no "friendly democracy" or "virus".

### PART V A B S T R A C T

The small town life has been in American literature since the time of Captain John Smith in his True Relations (1608) and Governor Winthrop and Governor Bradford in their Journals. Phillip French continued the description of American town life in the American Village (1775). The Hartford Wits were concerned with both the village violence (Greenfield Hill) and village stupidity (W'Fincal). James Penruddock Cooper and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow before the Civil War, Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins Freeman after it, liked in bringing the village to the foreground as a place of "pleasant virtues". Edgar Watson Bowes, however, revealed the dark life of a 19th century mid-western village in The Story of a Country Town (1903). Mark Twain continued the onslaught against the village with The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg (1899) and the publication of Edgar Lee Masters' Spoon River Anthology (1915) culminated in the vituperative work of Anderson and scurrilous satires by Ibsen. The village

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## A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this thesis has been an objective analysis of the controversial writings on the American village. For such an analysis, books by representatives of both the attack and the defense have been discussed as an indication of the future reputation of the village may be had; whether it be "friendly democracy" or "virus".

The small town has held a place in American literature since the times of Captain John Smith in his True Relations (1608) and Governor Winthrop and Governor Bradford in their Journals. Phillip Freneau continued the description of American town life in the American Village (1772). The Hartford Wits were concerned with both the village virtues (Greenfield Hill) and village stupidity (M'Fingal). James Fenimore Cooper and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow before the Civil War, Sarah Orne Jewitt and Mary Wilkins Freeman after it, aided in bringing the village to the foreground as a place of "pleasant virtues". Edgar Watson Howe, however, revealed the drab life of a 19th century mid-western village in The Story of a Country Town (1883). Mark Twain continued the onslaught against the village with The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg (1899) and the publication of Edgar Lee Masters' Spoon River Anthology (1915) culminated in the vituperative work of Anderson and scornful satires by Lewis. The village

## TO A F T E R

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was not without its defenders for William Allen White, Booth Tarkington and Dorothy Canfield Fisher had been writing in praise of village ways long before the attack reached its peak of Anderson and Lewis. In the thesis the authors of the controversy have been divided into the attackers and the defenders regardless of their literary chronology that a more objective view may be had.

Sherwood Anderson has treated the village of the middle west as a place of despair and futility despite his deep sympathy for the folk. Winesburg, Ohio (1919) is a series of grotesques depicting the repressed lives of the inhabitants, their inhibitions and follies. The characters attempt to rise above their state of decrepitude but soon sink back to their former passiveness, Tar; a Midwest Childhood (1926) is introspective auto-biography and presents the coarse psychology, manners and customs, personalities, and view of life to be found in a middle-western town. Anderson himself admits he has not found his " thing to love " and the result of " frustrated lovers and confused children " does not appear to be completely illuminating of any mode of life.

Sinclair Lewis continued the work begun by Anderson, in Main Street (1920) and Babbitt ( 1922). The former is an attack on the average American town ; its dullness, lack of culture and passive content. Babbitt satirizes the American business man, and shows his weakness for conventionality. Yet like Anderson, Lewis has permitted his personal life



with his intense hatred for the small town to flavor his writings. His novels are satiric and must necessarily be exaggerated. As a result, the picture of the small town is not objective or realistic.

William Allen White, "defender of the village", presents a story of youth against a democratic village background in At the Court of Bayville (1899). A Certain Rich Man (1906) shows that same democratic village being destroyed by economic greed. In Our Town (1906) is the inside story of the town newspaper, with its insight into the friendly spirit of the town. White's abounding faith in the essential goodness of man is seen in In The Heart of a Fool (1918). This novel traces the growth of a democratic Harvey with its kindly spirit to a city of avarice and greed. William Allen White is a staunch defender of village ways, but would keep his village stagnant at the end of the 19th century. His love for the village admits no change or progress and in the end serves only to stunt that which he would foster.

Booth Tarkington, like White, presents a picture of the American village as seen through "rosy-colored glasses". But despite his lenient point of view, he has done much toward lifting the despairingly gloomy veil from the fiction of the Middle West. The Gentleman from Indiana (1899) is an expression of the "good dear people" to be found in the mid-western small town. The Turmoil (1915) and The Magnificent

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Ambersons ( 1918 ) indicate the pressure put upon the democratic and friendly village by the on-coming rush of aggressive industrialism with its greed and avarice. Alice Adams (1921) goes through the successive stages of almost any girl who seeks in vain for a rich husband. In the end she realizes the beauty and the good life to be had in the middle-class social level of the town. The Midlander ( 1924 ) depicts the mid-western town as a place of dignified spaciousness as compared with the squeezed brownstone fronts of New York City and its equally squeezed and purposeless living.

Anderson and Lewis were vituperative against the village of fiction for its dullness and repression ; White and Tarkington reached the other extreme of presenting a picture of " good dear folk " and complete happiness and innocence. But Dorothy Canfield Fisher took the middle ground - and in the last analysis -, a stand which will prove most realistic of all. She has given us a picture of the good to be found in a small town but she has not at all closed her eyes to the faults found there too. Hillsboro People ( 1915 ) is a group of stories whose characters are compelling, not only for their virtues, but also for their very human failings. Rough Hewn ( 1922 ) shows the powerful attraction of a Vermont town with its " folksy ways " even after a number of years in the exciting cities of Europe. The Brimming Cup ( 1920 ) and The Deepening Stream ( 1930 ) tell of the benefits of bringing up children in the right atmosphere of village life.

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That the " small town " is not for everyone is true, but the reputation of the small town of fiction will depend in large part upon the novels just discussed. And of these novels, Mrs. Fisher's are obviously the most characteristic of true village life. Her careful avoidance of either attack or defense makes her its most promising support. Admitting its failings, she shows that fullness in living does not depend upon " citified conveniences ", but upon friendly ways, helpfulness, and dependability. The small town of fiction will probably maintain a reputation of being just halfway between the beautiful Emporia, Kansas, and hideous Gopher Prairie, Minnesota, as is everything good in this life.

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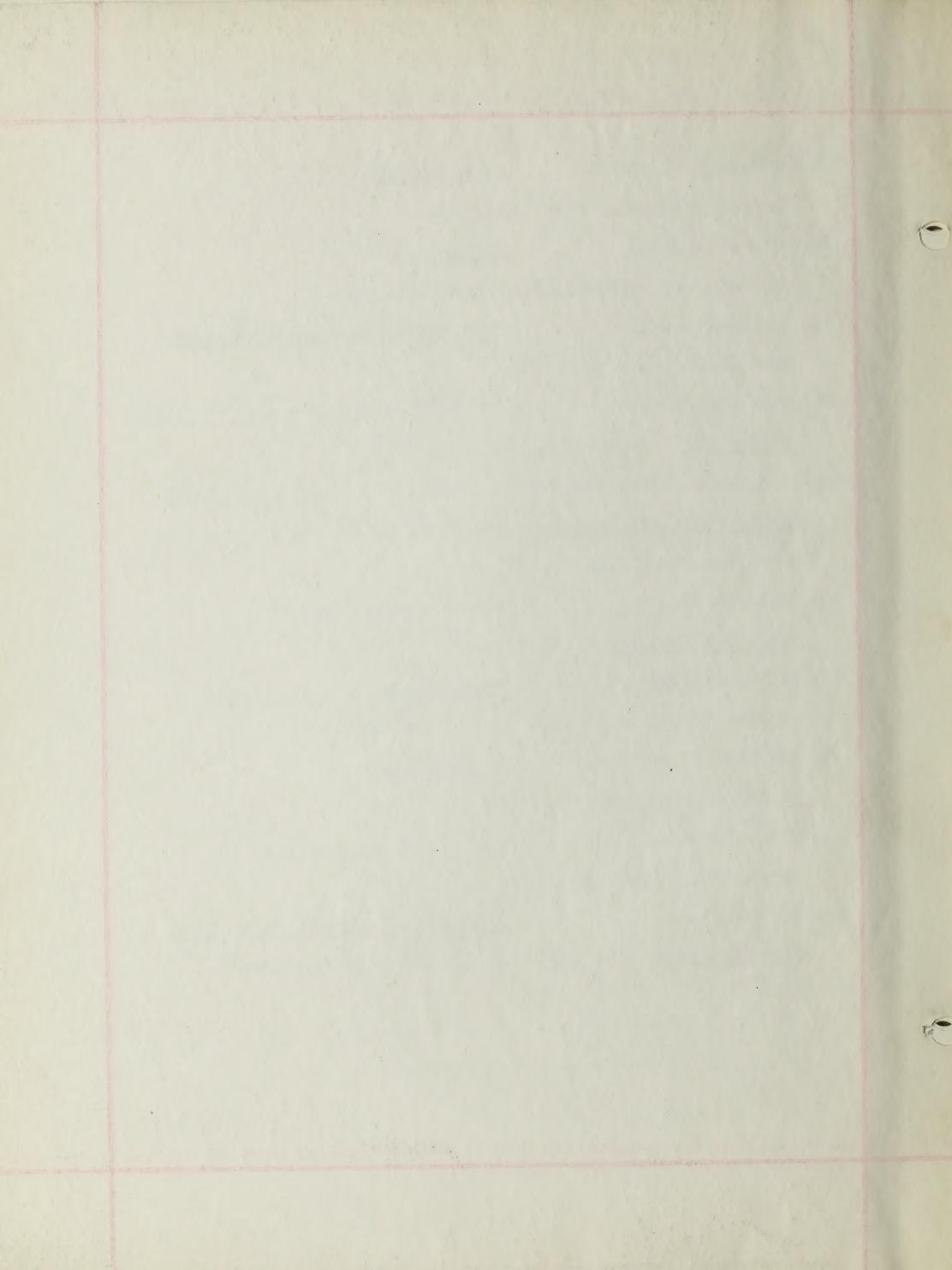
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